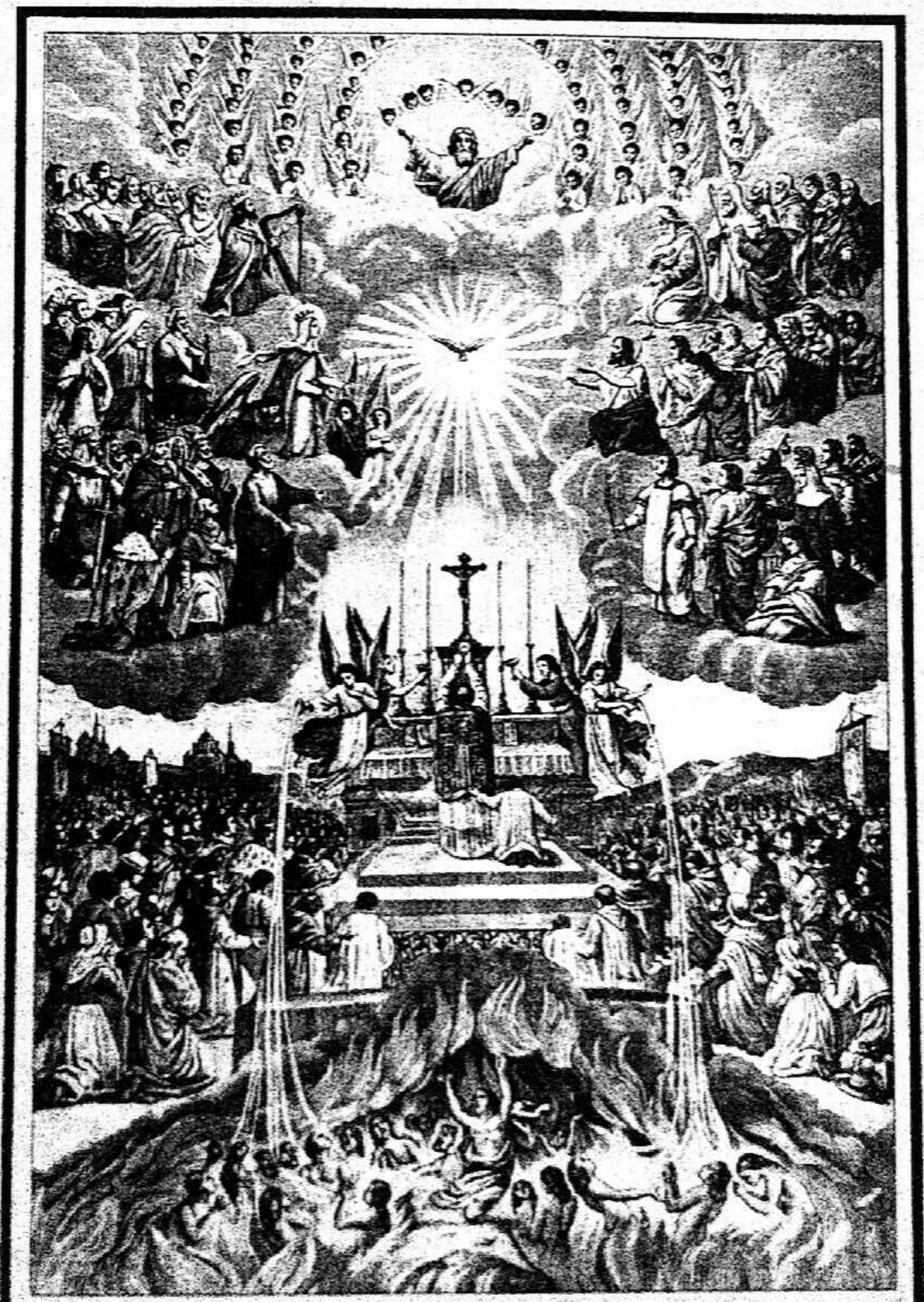
MY CATHOLIC FAITH



My Catholic Faith

A CATECHISM IN PICTURES

by

Most Reverend Louis LaRavoire Morrow, S. T. D.

Bishop of Krishnagar

> "Now this is everlasting life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3).

Gilbert Nunes

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PREFACE

[illegible] Catholic Faith" is prepared for those who desire to have a concise knowledge [illegible] doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church. It is a complete catechism, [illegible] for ready reference, for it takes up in a clear and practical manner the questions and subjects that are likely to arouse the interest of the general reader, whether Catholic or non-Catholic.

In the preparation of the book we had especially in mind those earnest souls who seek to understand the Catholic Church, but not understanding it, cannot yet be completely convinced. And this is also why the book has been found invaluable by catechists and members of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, in their work of teaching both adults and children. We have been assured by priest friends that in getting their catechetical sermons ready they have not seldom taken a lesson or two of "My Catholic Faith" because the matter is well divided and to the point.

At the same time, the form in which topics are presented complete in facing pages, as well as the numerous illustrations and non-technical language, make of "My Catholic Faith" a practical textbook for that important subject, Religion. In fact it has already been adopted in the secondary schools and junior colleges of several dioceses in our country.

"My Catholic Faith" is the last book in our "My Religion Series", consisting of: "My Jesus and I" for little ones of the kindergarten age; "My First Communion" for those preparing for that important event; "My Catechism, Book I" and "My Catechism, Book II" for intermediate grades, to be accompanied by "My Bible History"; and lastly this book that we here offer, "My Catholic Faith".

"My Catholic Faith" follows the strictly logical sequence in subject-matter: (1) the Credo, containing what we must *know* and *believe:* (2) the Commandments of God and the Church, containing what we must *do;* and (3) the Sacraments and Prayer, containing the *means of grace* by which we can attain God. It is not, however, necessary to follow this sequence when reading, teaching, or studying this book. "My Catholic Faith" is so constructed that one group of topics can be taken up independently of the rest. The Credo, which is the doctrinal part, is generally more difficult for young people to understand than the Commandments. For this reason the first part of the book may be postponed by teachers of religion until the other parts have been thoroughly considered.

Special attention was paid to the selection of appropriate texts from the Bible. These will familiarize the reader with Holy Scripture, and effectively prove the falsity of the anti-Catholic charge that the Church discourages the reading of the Bible. The revised editions of the Baltimore Catechism and of the New Testament, which have been so painstakingly prepared by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D. C., are used in this book.

Two subjects of utmost importance are almost completely dealt with: the Catholic Church (*pages 94 to 149*), and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (*pages 264 to 293*). Other topics which may be termed not strictly doctrinal—such as Eastern Churches, Roman Curia, Church and State, Papal Decorations, Science and the Bible, Capital and Labor, Evolution—are discussed, because we wish to aid our people not only in their devotion, but also in their desire for information about the attitudes and practices of Holy Mother Church.

It is our earnest hope that "My Catholic Faith" will help our beloved Catholic people to know their religion exactly, and to practice it according to the teachings of the Church and its Divine Founder.

Bishop Morrow

As a

THANK-OFFERING

for innumerable graces received
this work

is humbly dedicated to

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

in the
Sacrament of His Love

THE MOST BLESSED EUCHARIST

for the Benefit of the Young

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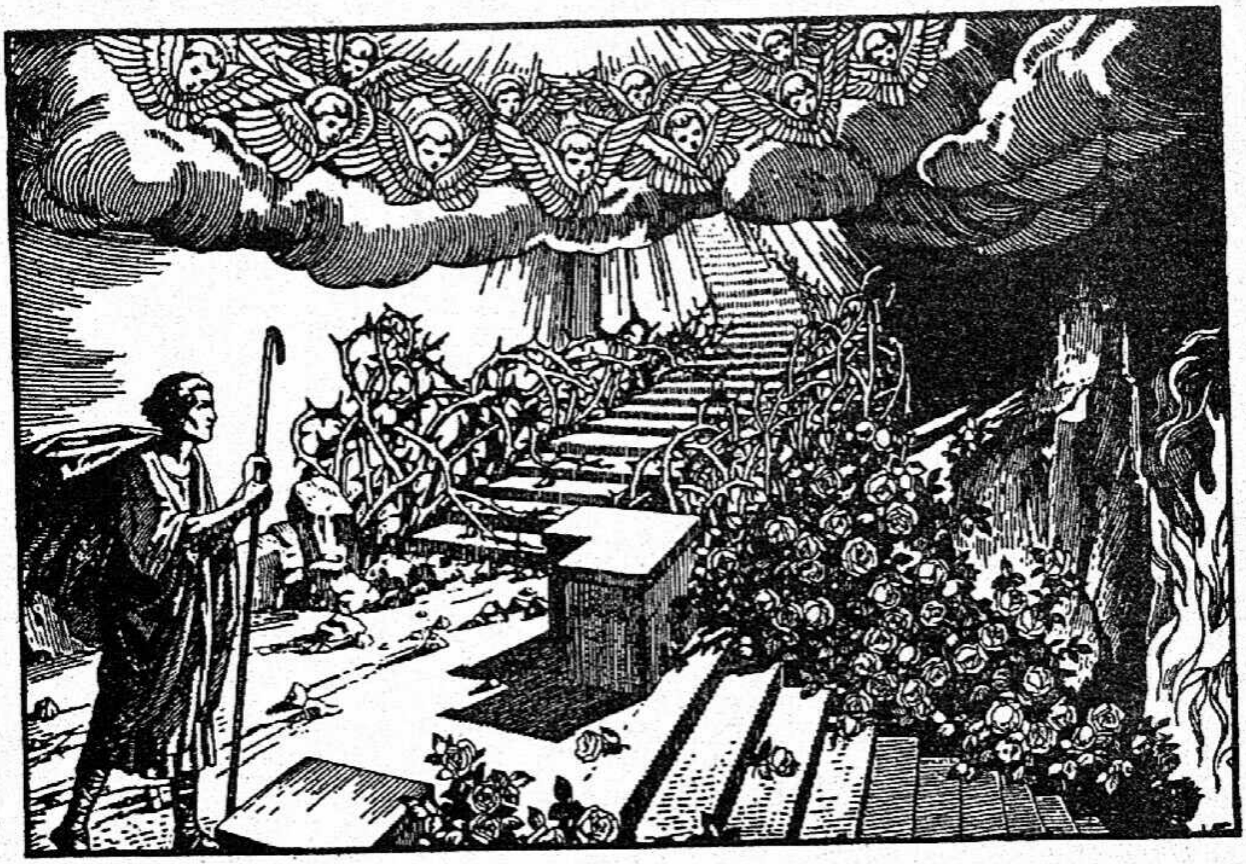
PART ONE

What To Believe:
The Apostles' Creed



In creating us, God gave us the power and right to choose which path we should follow in life: either the path of obedience, or the path of disobedience to His commandments. The first seems wearisome and full of thorns, but reward comes in the end: happiness with God. The second seems full of pleasures and roses, but punishment awaits the traveler at the end: eternal damnation in hell.

Each must choose for himself. We may find the choice a hard struggle. We shall be strengthened in the choice of the difficult path if we remember that we belong to God, that He loves us, that He will help us and is waiting for us at the end of the road — of obedience.

1. Religion and the End of Man

What is the destiny of man?—Man's high destiny is to go to God, because man comes from God, and belongs entirely to God.

1. Our reason tells us that Someone *made* us. That Someone is God.

Nothing can proceed from *nothing*. If there had ever been a moment when nothing existed, nothing would ever have existed. Therefore, because we exist, we know Someone who made us also exists; that Someone is God. "He made us, and not we ourselves" (Ps. 99:3). "All things have been created through and unto Him" (Col. 1:16).

2. Our reason also tells us that God must have made us for some purpose. God made man to *know* Him, to *love* Him, and to *serve* Him in this world, and to be happy forever with Him in the next. God made us for Himself. The *end* of man, as of all creation, is the glory of God; to manifest the divine perfections, to proclaim the goodness, majesty, and power of God.

"The Lord hath made all things for Himself" (Prov. 16:4). Whether he wishes to or not, man must manifest God's perfections, dominion, and glory. Man's very existence does this; even his sins will in the end show forth God's infinite holiness and justice.

3. Through glorifying God, man is *destined* to share His everlasting happiness in heaven. Man was created chiefly for the life beyond the grave; this present one is merely a preparation for the eternal life.

In this life we are exiles, wanderers, pilgrims. Heaven, the Home of God, is our true country, our true Home. There God wants to share with us His own unmeasured bliss. "For we have no permanent city, but we seek for the city that is to come" (Heb. 13:14).

4. We belong to God. Since we are His creatures, we have certain *duties towards God* which we must fulfill. Religion teaches us what these duties are.

What is Religion?—Religion is the virtue by which we give to God the honor and service due to Him alone as our Creator, Master, and Supreme Lord.

It is by religion that we know, love, and serve God as He commands us to know, love and serve Him. It is by religion, then, that we fulfill the end for which we were made, and so save our soul.

In order to practice this virtue, we must:

1. ***Believe*** all the truths revealed by God.

In religion we learn about God and His perfections. We learn something about His great love for us. We learn what is right and what is wrong. We learn *what God commands us to do.* We learn about the future that He has prepared for us.

2. ***Carry out*** in our lives what we learn about the duties we owe to God, about *His commands and wishes.* Mere knowledge is not religion, and will avail us nothing. The devil has knowledge, but he has no religion. Religion includes the *service of God* in fulfilling what we have learned of our duties towards Him. Religion is not a matter of feeling; it is a matter of will and of action.

Our Lord says: "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and *keep* it" (Luke 11:28). The Apostle St. James said: "But be *doers* of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (Jas. 1).

Is it necessary for us to practice Religion?—It is absolutely necessary for us to practice religion; God gives us no choice in the matter.

1. Our *chief business* in life, the business which God commands us to attend to, is to go to God. And this depends on our practice of religion.

It is by religion that we fulfill the purpose for which we were created. By *believing* what God has revealed, we ***know*** God. By *knowing* God, we cannot help but ***love*** Him. By practicing what we learn and *obeying* God's commands, we ***serve*** Him. "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (John 14:21).

2. Many people spend their lives in a vain pursuit of riches, honors, and pleasures. But these never satisfy the heart of man even on earth. Besides, they have to be *left behind* when the hour of death comes.

"For when he shall die, he shall take nothing away: nor shall his glory descend with him" (Ps. 48:18).

From whom do we learn to know, love, and serve God?—We learn to know, love, and serve God from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who teaches us through the Catholic Church.

1. The study in which Jesus Christ teaches us about God and how to know, love, and serve Him, is the study of Religion. It is the most important study anyone can undertake. The *neglect* of this study is the root *cause of crime* in the world at present. Without a knowledge of God men give way to their basest passions.

Our salvation is much more important than a knowledge of physics, poetry, or history. All our science and knowledge, with our wealth and honors, will be profitless if we do not save our soul. "What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matt. 16:26).

2. This study needs thought and attention. We need to listen to a good ***teacher.*** We cannot study it well by ourselves alone.

The deacon Philip asked the Ethiopian reading Holy Scripture, "Dost thou then understand what thou art reading?" But he said, "Why, how can I, unless someone shows me?" (Acts 8:31).

Who are those that advocate no study of religion?—Those that advocate no study of religion are generally termed free-thinkers, agnostics, skeptics, and rationalists.

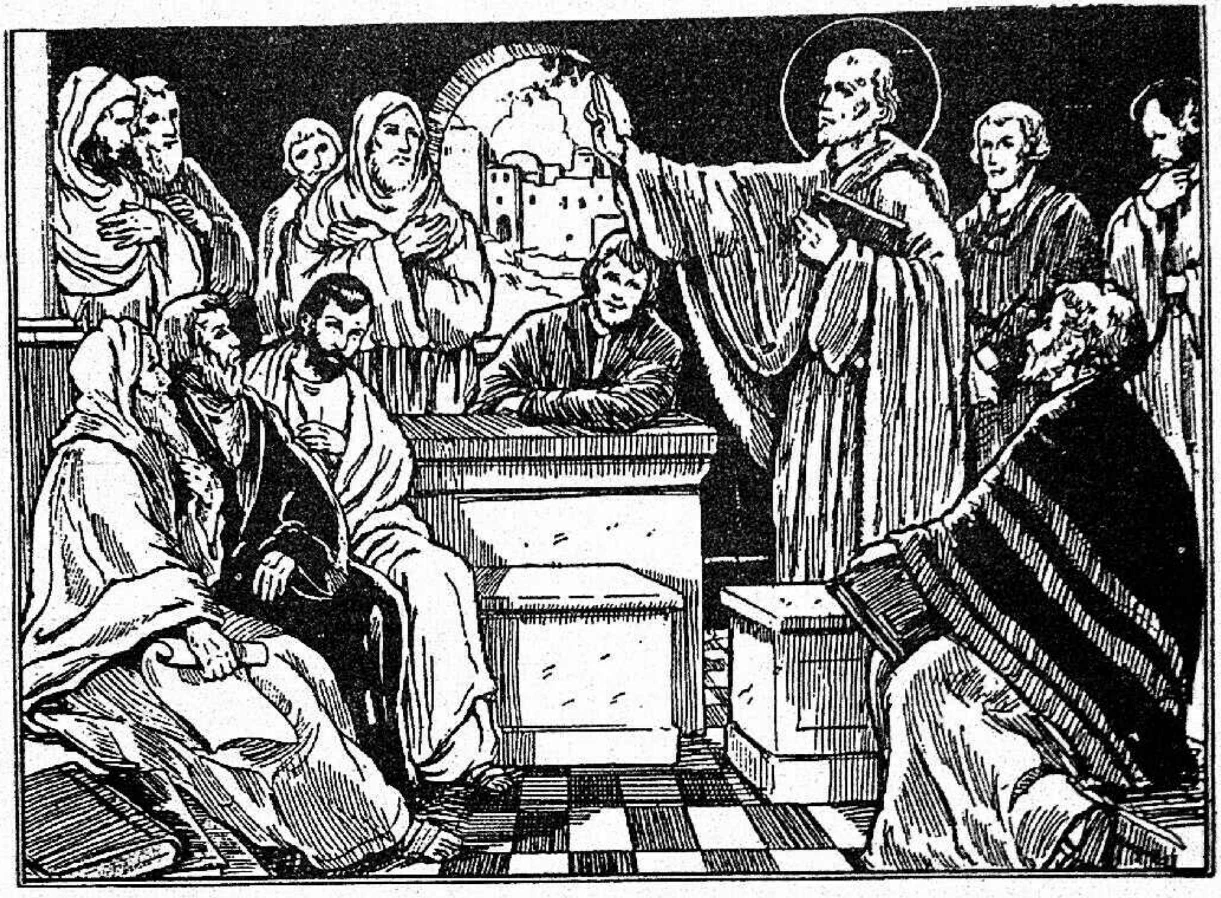
1. These thinkers claim that all problems can be solved by the use of the *intellect* alone, without necessity of any principle, law, dogma or authority.

"Freedom of thought" has a pleasant sound, but it is against reason; by it the mind is fettered by error. We submit our minds freely to natural and scientific truths; that is true freedom. If there is no freedom of thought in mathematics, why in religion?

2. "Freedom of thought" is evidently a *contradiction;* we are not free to think what is not the truth. There are fundamental laws that bind the intellect.

For instance, are we free to believe that the sun revolves around the earth, even if it appears to do so?

3. The intelligent man, in order to attain the kind of freedom humanly possible, should find out to which authority he must submit; he must discover which is the ***Law.*** And this is why the rational man studies Religion, to find out this fundamental Law.



The Apostles, before they parted, gathered together in Jerusalem in the first Council of the Church. There they decided to put down in a brief statement their principal doctrines, so that their teachings might be uniform wherever they preached. This statement of the articles of faith we call today "The Apostles' Creed". It was formulated in order to put into fruition the command of Our Lord: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days" (Matt. 28:19-20).

2. The Apostles' Creed

Where do we find the chief truths taught by Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church?—We find the chief truths taught by Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church in the Apostles' Creed.

1. A *creed* is a summary or statement of what one believes. *"Creed"* comes from the Latin *credo*, which means *I believe;* that is, I accept or hold true something on the word of another.

"I believe," with relation to the Apostles' Creed, means that *I firmly assent* to everything contained in it. I believe it exactly as if I had seen those truths with my own eyes. I believe it on the *authority or word of God,* Who cannot deceive or be deceived.

2. The Apostles' Creed is so called because it was composed by the Apostles, and contains a *summary* of the *principal truths* they taught.

The Apostles' Creed is repeated at Baptism, as a declaration of faith. In ancient times it was required before Baptism, as a sign of fitness for reception into the Church.

3. The Apostles' Creed has come down to us *intact,* except for a few clauses added by the Church later, in order to counteract various heresies. These additions, however, are not new doctrines, but a clarification of what the Creed already contained.

Thus the words "Creator of heaven and earth" were added to counteract the Manichaean heresy that the world was created by the principle of evil; and the word "Catholic" was added, to distinguish the True Church from churches springing up around it. As our Lord said, "And you also bear witness, because from the beginning you are with me" (John 15:27).

3. There are several *other creeds* used by the Church, in substance identical with the Apostles' Creed.

The *Nicene Creed*, which is said in the Mass, was mainly drawn up at the Council of Nicea, in the year 325. The *Athanasian Creed* is said by priests in the Divine Office for Sunday.

Into how many articles may the Apostles' Creed be divided?—The Apostles' Creed may be divided into twelve articles.

1. All the articles are absolutely *necessary* to faith: if even one article is omitted or changed, faith would be destroyed.

It is symbolical to divide the Apostles' Creed into twelve articles, because the Apostles numbered twelve; thus we are reminded that the Creed comes to us and was taught by the Apostles of Our Lord.

2. The following are the articles:

(*1*) I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;

(*2*) And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord;

(*3*) Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;

(*4*) Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

(*5*) He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead;

(*6*) He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;

(*7*) From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

(*8*) I believe in the Holy Ghost;

(*9*) The Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints;

(*10*) The forgiveness of sins;

(*11*) The resurrection of the body;

(*12*) And life everlasting. *Amen.*

The twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed contain the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, one God in three distinct Divine Persons,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—with the particular operations attributed to each Person. The Creed contains three distinct parts. The first part treats of God the Father and creation. The second part treats of God the Son and our redemption. And the third part treats of God the Holy Ghost and our sanctification.

What act of religion do we make when we say the Apostles' Creed?—When we say the Apostles' Creed we make an act of faith.

1. Christian faith is a supernatural gift of God which enables us to *believe* firmly whatever God has revealed, on the testimony of His word. By it we believe in the truth of many things which we cannot grasp with our *understanding.*

For example, we believe in God, although we cannot see Him. We believe in the Trinity, although it is beyond our understanding. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).

2. Faith does not require us to believe in anything *contrary to reason.* When we believe what we cannot perceive or understand, we act according to reason, which tells us that God cannot err, lie, or deceive us. We therefore put our *trust in God's word.*

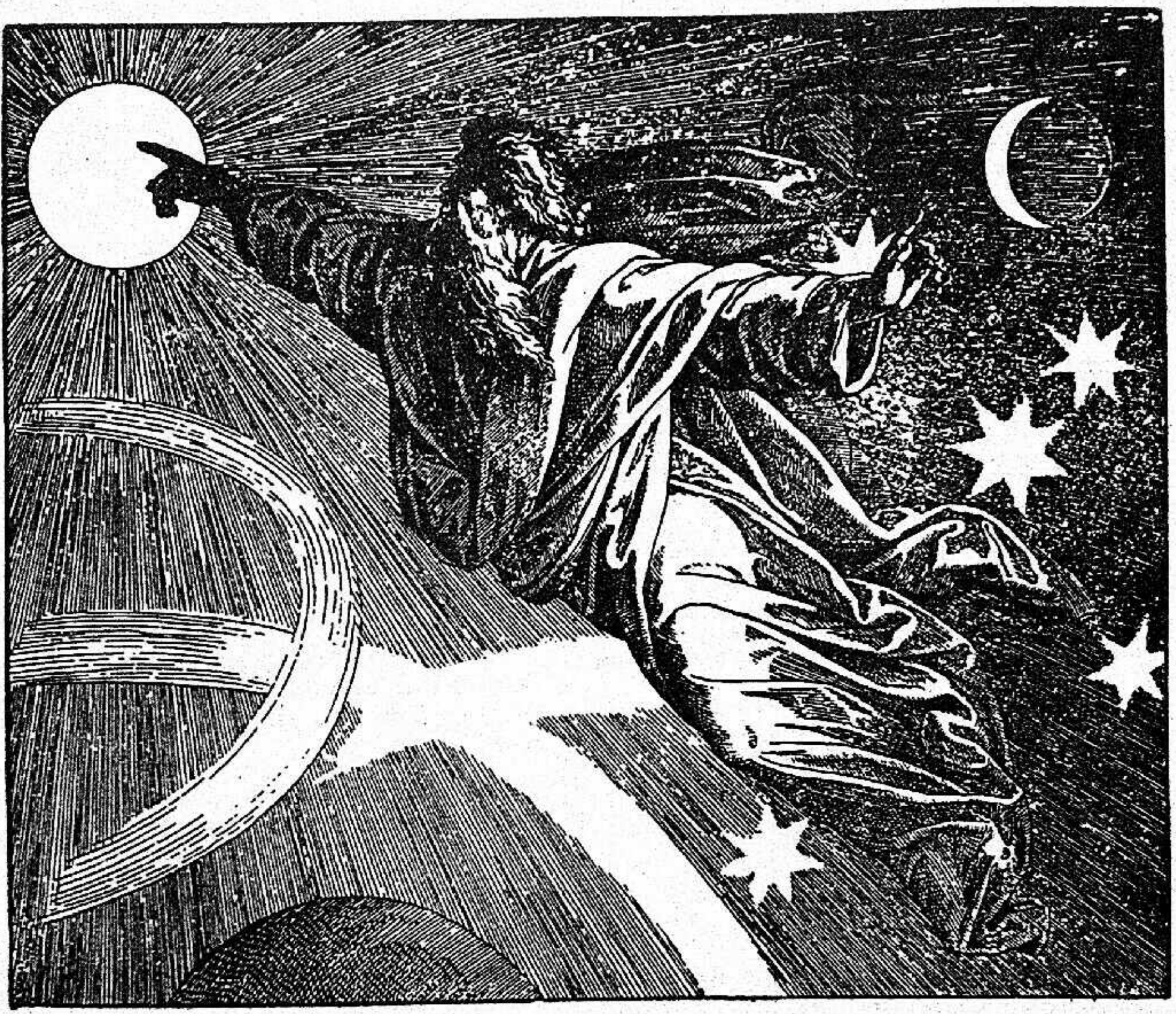
In many *natural things* we often believe what we do not see, as sound waves and atoms, on the testimony of scientists who have studied them. Thus we act *within reason;* but how much more reasonable it is to believe on the word of God!

3. A great *reward* in heaven awaits those who suffer persecution or die for the faith or some Christian virtue. The number of martyrs who have died for the Catholic faith is estimated at more than sixteen millions.

All the Apostles suffered persecution, and all except St. John suffered death by martyrdom, for their faith. St. John the Baptist was beheaded because he censured Herod for violating the law of marriage. St. John Nepomucene was put to death because he refused to violate the seal of confession. "Therefore, everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge him before my Father in heaven" (Matt. 10:32).

4. *Neglect of the study of the truths of* our religion is frequently the cause of lukewarmness, a bad life, and final apostasy and impenitence. We should be zealous in studying the Christian doctrine, in the catechism and religion lessons, in sermons, missions, and retreats.

If we have any doubts, we should consult our priests; God will not forgive ignorance if we voluntarily neglect the means He has granted to dissipate it.



God created the world in six days. On the first day He made light and darkness, day and night. On the second day He made the sky and divided the waters. On the third day of Creation, God caused dry land to appear out of the waters, and bade plants to spring forth from the land.

On the fourth day God made the sun, the moon, and the stars. On the fifth day He made creeping things, birds and fishes. On the sixth day God made beasts, and finally, man. Then on the seventh day God stopped working: He rested. "The heavens show forth the glory of God." (Ps. 18:2).

3. God the Supreme Being

(First Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

Who is God? – God is the Supreme Being, infinitely perfect, Who made all things and keeps them in existence.

1. God *made* everything—men, beasts, plants, planets, stars, everything. Not only that; God *keeps* everything in existence. Were He to take away His hand from what He created, everything would disappear into nothingness quicker than thought. Without a cause, there could be no effects. Without God, could there be anything at all?

"In him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). "In him were created all things" (Col. 1:16). "It is he who gives to all men life and breath and all things" (Acts 17:25).

2. The traditions of all nations and races support the idea of the existence of God. All nations and peoples have an *inner conviction* of God's existence; their intellect supports their instinctive trust.

Even among the wildest, most remote, and most degraded pagans there is invariably found the *worship of some deity* recognized as supreme, on whom man depends. There are savage peoples without ruler, laws, or even settlements, but never without some god that they worship with *prayer and sacrifice*.

What do we mean when we say that God is the Supreme Being?—When we say that God is the Supreme Being, we mean that He is above all creatures, the self-existing and infinitely perfect Spirit.

"I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no god" (Is. 44:6). " 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is coming' " (Apoc. 1:8).

What is a spirit?—A spirit is a being that has understanding and free will, but no body, and will never die.

1. God is a *pure spirit*. As God has no body, when we speak of His eyes and His hands we only speak in a figurative manner, in order to make ourselves more understandable according to our human way of speaking.

Our Lord said to the Samaritan woman at the well: "God is spirit; and they who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Yet God has often taken on visible forms, in order to be seen by men. Thus he showed Himself in the form of a dove at the baptism of Jesus, and in the form of tongues of fire on Pentecost. God is neither a dove nor tongues of fire; He merely assumed those forms in order to be seen by mortal eyes.

2. Angels and devils are pure spirits. *Men* are only partly spiritual, because they have a body. Man's soul is a spirit, absolutely independent of matter, and by creatures indestructible.

As spirits, God and men have this in common, though in different degrees: all have understanding, intellect, and free will. By his free will man can even defy his Creator, God.

What do we mean when we say that God is self-existing?—When we say that God is self-existing we mean that He does not owe His existence to any other being.

1. God made us, but *who* made God? God said to Moses, "I am who am" (Exod. 3:14). He exists of Himself, deriving His Being from no other. God is the First Cause.

All other beings and things owe their existence to God. In comparison to Him, we are nothing.

2. Man can never have a *complete knowledge* of God. Man is finite and cannot fully understand the infinite. A cup of water can contain the immensity of the ocean more easily than man can fully understand God.

We know God only partly, from the order, harmony, and existence of things, from our conscience, and from God's revelations to man.

What do we mean when we say that God is infinitely perfect?—When we say that God is infinitely perfect, we mean that He has all perfections without limit.

God is immense and eternal, "an ocean without shore or bottom," the unchangeable Being that only Himself can fully understand: "Of his greatness there is no end" (Ps. 144:3).

1. God is so great and wonderful that He needs nothing to make Him greater or more wonderful. He possesses *all perfections,* countless, innumerable, illimitable, boundless.

God cannot be better, holier, or more perfect than He already is. He is at the acme of perfection, the uncreated, the Infinite. "Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee" (3 Kings 8:27).

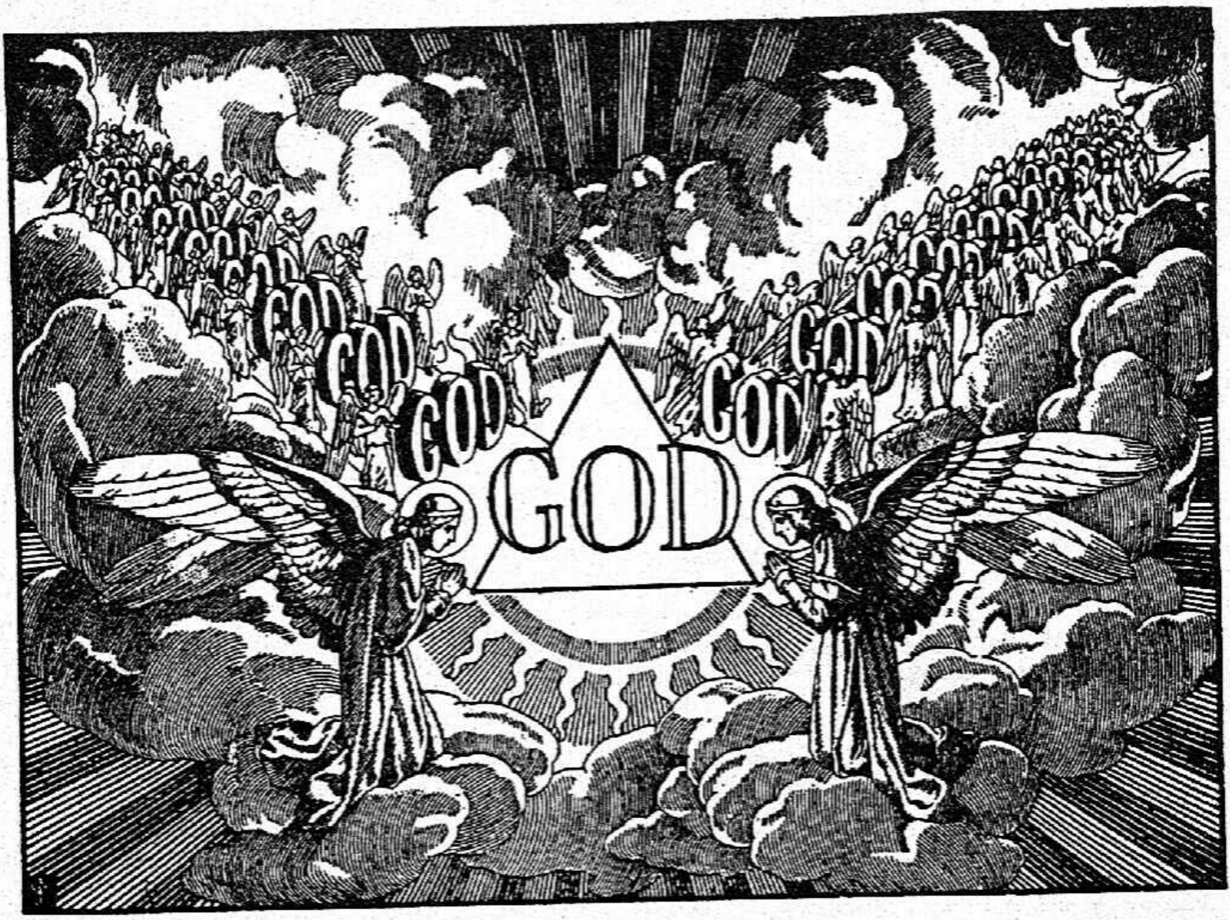
2. So perfect is God that He is infinitely *incomprehensible,* incapable of being completely understood. Reason can *verify* the revelation that God made of Himself. But when we make our reason or our emotions the final authority, we make ourselves our own god, and shut the road to the supernatural, the Infinite.

God alone can bridge the chasm that yawns between the finite and the infinite. When we take advantage of His grace to seek Him in loving trust, He holds out His hand, a Father calling to children, to cross the chasm safely to Him.

3. The Creator is above all the created, though something of Him, some *likeness* of His Being, may be found in every creature. But even were all creatures, from the most glorious seraphim to the lowliest of moss, to combine their powers and perfections, theirs would be a faint shadow of God's all-encompassing supremacy.

What are some of the perfections of God?—Some of the perfections of God are: God is eternal, all-good, all-knowing, all-present, and almighty.

God's perfections do not exist separately in Him, but are one and identical with Himself. They are only various manifestations of His one nature and perfection. In God, for example, His goodness is one with His wisdom and power. His perfections, besides being one and the same in Him, are also identical with Him: that is, God *Himself* is infinity, wisdom, goodness, power.



God is eternal: He has no beginning and no end. Before there ever was anything, there was God. He always was, is, and ever will be. With God there is no time: everything is present. We cannot imagine eternity, but we can understand what it is to be without beginning or end.

4. The Perfections of God

What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?—When we say that God is eternal, we mean that He always was and always will be, and always remains the same.

1. God had *no beginning;* there never was a time when there was no God. God can never cease to exist; He will have no end. He will always be living, immortal.

There is no time with God: with Him there is neither past nor future; everything is present. "One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. 3:8). "Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed, from eternity and to eternity thou art God" (Ps. 89:2). "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end" (Apoc. 1:8).

2. God will always remain *the same.* He is the "Father of lights, with whom there is no change" (Jas. 1:17).

God cannot change. The God that is God now is the same God that has ever been, the same God that will ever be, from and throughout all eternity, the "Father of Lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration" (Jas. 1:17).

What do we mean when we say that God is all-good?—When we say that God is all-good, we mean that He is infinitely lovable in Himself, and that from His fatherly love every good comes to us.

1. God is Himself *love.* Love is part of His nature. Compared to God's infinite goodness, the goodness of man is nothing, only the shadow of a shadow.

Men, creatures of God, are good because God made them to His image and likeness. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is sweet" (Ps. 33:9).

2. Out of His *goodness,* God created angels and men, although He had no need of

them. God loves His creatures far more than a mother loves the children she has borne.

God gives us the beautiful world to live in. He takes care of our body and soul. He showers benefits and graces on us day after day. He prepares for us a place in heaven. Above all, He sent His Son down to earth to die for us.

What do we mean when we say that God is all-knowing?—When we say that God is all-knowing, we mean that He knows all things, past, present, and future, even our most secret thoughts, words, and actions.

1. God is all-knowing. Before His eyes *all secrets,* even the most hidden, are clear, even secrets that will not be thought of by man until the end of the world.

God knows us for what we are: we cannot hide anything from Almighty God. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of him to whom we have to give account" (Heb. 4:13).

2. God, all-knowing, will one day make everything *known* to everybody, disclosing our entire lives for all to read and know.

If we think of this power of God to see and know all things, and His promise to make everything manifest on the last day, we can more easily resist temptations to sin. "For there is nothing hidden that will not be made manifest; nor anything concealed that will not be known" (Luke 8:17).

What do we mean when we say that God is all-present?—When we say that God is all-present, we mean that He is everywhere.

1. God is all-present, because there is nothing that can have existence *apart* from Him. All creation exists in Him as thought exists in the mind. There is no place where God is not.

" 'Do I not fill heaven and earth?' saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:24). "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). However, we must not make the mistake of thinking that God, in Whom everything exists, is limited by this everything. He has no limits, and exists outside as well as in all creation.

2. God is all-present, present everywhere, at the same time. He is not like man, that cannot be in two places at the same time. God is wholly everywhere *at the same time.*

The presence of God should be an incentive for us to do everything to please Him. As we are careful never to do anything wrong in the presence of our mother, how much more careful should we be in the presence of God! "Shall a man be hid in secret places, and I not see him?" (Jer. 23:24).

3. Although God is everywhere, we do not see Him, because He is a spirit, and cannot be seen with our eyes.

Similarly, we cannot see our own soul or that of another. "God is spirit, and they who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

What do we mean when we say that God is almighty?—When we say that God is almighty, we mean that He can do all things.

1. God can do anything, by a mere act of His will. *Nothing* is impossible to God.

"Things that are impossible with men are possible with God"–(Luke 18:27). The only thing God cannot do is to make a *contradiction:* He cannot will wrong, because wrong is a contradiction of His goodness.

2. God's *omnipotence* or power is known to us especially by the magnificence of creation, and by His miracles.

Yet God created all the immensity of the heavens with nothing except His word. "Be light made. And light was made" (Gen. 1:3). In the same way Our Lord worked many of His miracles. "Great is the Lord . . . of his greatness there is no end" (Ps. 144).

Is God all-wise, all-holy, all-merciful, and all-just?—Yes, God is all-wise, all-holy, all-merciful, and all-just.

1. God is *all-wise.* The more we learn of the wonders of the universe, the more we are amazed by the infinite wisdom of God, by His almighty power.

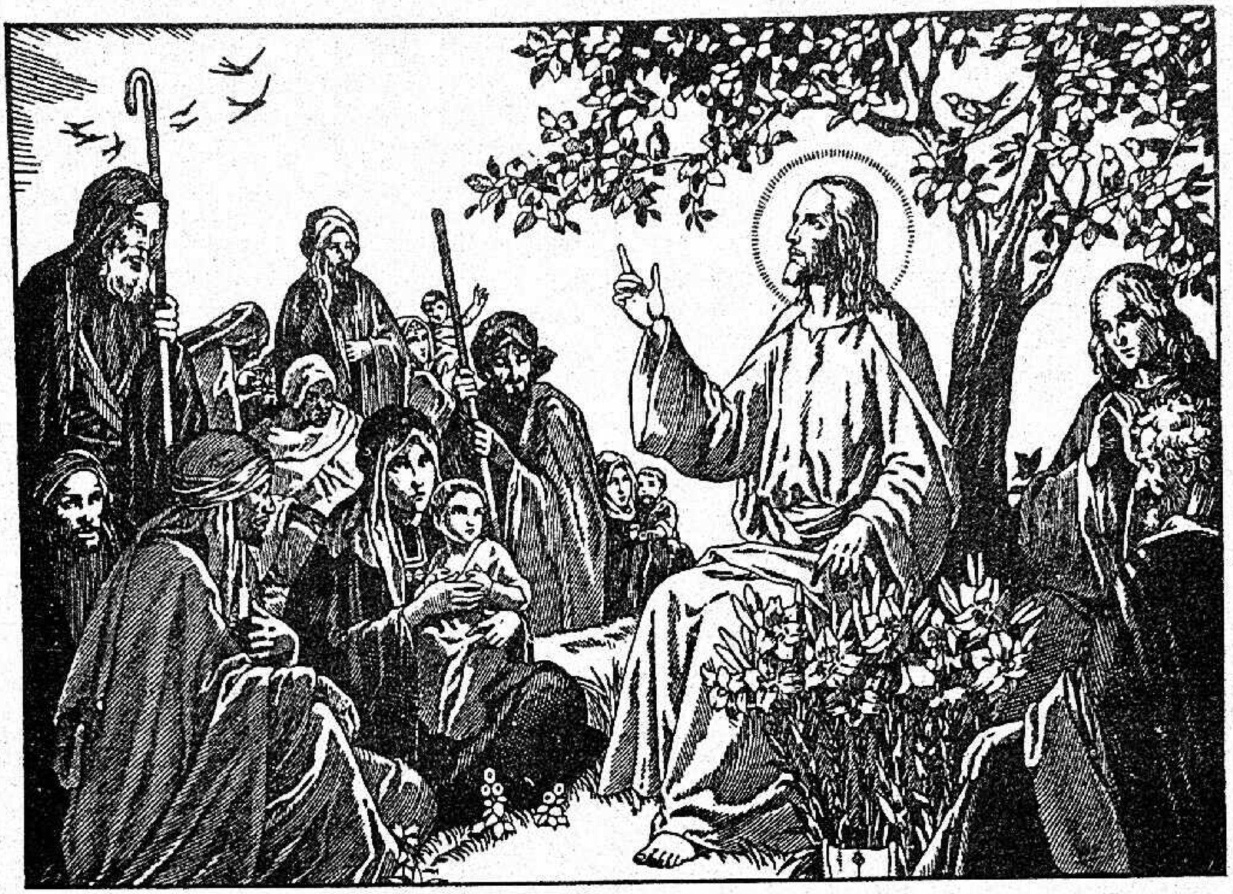
His knowledge is infinite. He knows how to direct all things to the highest ends, and by the most fitting means.

2. God is *infinitely holy* in Himself. He loves good and hates evil. Therefore He is also *all-just.* He will punish the wicked and reward the good. "Be holy, because I am holy" (Lev. 11:44).

Partial justice is done in this life, for often the good are happy, and the wicked are tormented by their conscience. But *complete justice* will not be accomplished till the next life.

3. God is *infinitely merciful.*

He gives sinners time for repentance. He receives us back with joy when we repent. But merciful as He is, we must not presume on His mercy, for "God will not be mocked." "The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and plenteous in mercy" (Ps. 102:8). "He is long-suffering, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).



Many people make themselves miserable worrying over the future. They should have more trust in Divine Providence. Let them do the best they can, and leave the rest to God, Who cares for them. Our Lord said, "Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more value than they? . . . Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or, What are we to put on?' for your Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you besides" (Matt. 6:26-33).

5. Divine Providence

Does God see us? – God sees us, and watches over us with loving care.

1. God preserves and governs the world. If He were to take away for one instant His sustaining power, the whole creation would at once fall back into *nothingness.*

It is as if He held us in His hand. If He withdrew it for a moment, we would be nothing. "When thou shalt take away their breath, they shall die, and return again to the dust" (Ps. 103:29).

2. Nothing happens without the *will or permission of* God. Our Lord tells us that not one sparrow falls to the ground without the will of our Heavenly Father, and that the very hairs of our head are numbered.

God is to the world and men as the engine is to a train, as the pilot is to a ship. He guides the whole universe and all creatures. He guides the nations. "Cast all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

What is God's loving care for us called? –God's loving care for us is called Divine Providence, His plan for guiding creatures to their proper end.

1. Divine Providence is *good, constant,* and *just.* It watches over even the humblest and most despised creature on earth.

Of the paternal tenderness of God, Holy Scripture speaks thus: "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee in my hands; thy walls are always before my eyes" (Is. 49:15, 16).

2. God has special care for those who are poor, despised, and forgotten by the world. He has often shown forth His glory by means of the *humble.*

So poor shepherds were the first to receive news of the birth of the Saviour. So poor fishermen were His Apostles. So a poor maiden was His Mother.

If Divine Providence is good, why do poverty, sickness, sufferings, and other physical evils exist? – Physical evils are often the result of the weakness of creatures in body and mind.

Although we often do not understand God's arrangements, we must have faith and exclaim with the Apostle: "How incomprehensible are God's judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!" (Rom. 11:33).

1. Physical evil is partly a *punishment* for actual sin. It serves to *sanctify the good,* and helps them attain eternal salvation. The greatest sufferers have often been the greatest saints. God sends suffering to the just man in order to prove his love.

So holy Job lost everything he had, yet loved God more. So Tobias became blind and poor, and only proved his love for God.

2. God never sends anyone suffering beyond his strength. To gain merit, we must be *patient* and *resigned* under suffering. Let us imitate Our Lord in the Garden, whose prayer was, "Father, not my will, but thine, be done!" Our Lord taught us to say, in the *Our Father,* "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

He who resigns himself joyfully to the will of God, in sickness, death, poverty, persecution, and other misfortunes, obtains true peace of heart; he will be blessed even on this earth.

3. God often sends *physical* evil to sinners in order to bring them back into the right way. It serves as a *warning* to them.

Among those who were converted through bodily sickness, we may mention St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius of Loyola.

3. Sufferings can be a boon, and should be *welcomed.* By sufferings, patiently accepted, the punishment due for sin is diminished or cancelled. The more we suffer in this world, the less would we have to pay in the next life, in purgatory.

As St. Paul said, "I am filled with comfort; I overflow with joy in all our troubles" (2 Cor. 7:4). "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us." And St. Ignatius spoke from experience when he said, "When God sends us some great trouble, it is a sign that He designs great things for us, to raise us to great holiness."

If Divine Providence is just, why do the good often suffer misfortunes, and the wicked enjoy prosperity and honors?—The misfortunes and satisfactions of the world are not real and lasting, and cannot gauge God's justice.

1. No sinner has true happiness; his conscience will not give him inner peace. Riches, honor, and pleasures can never give peace to the spirit. On the other hand, no lover of God has true misery, for he possesses inner peace and a good conscience. Real *reward* and *punishment* begin only after death.

On earth sinners are rewarded for whatever good they do. Their good fortune lasts only for this life. The just are punished on earth for whatever sins they may have committed. Their reward is full in the other life.

3. We must therefore resign ourselves lovingly to the *will of God.* Thus we shall have peace of mind even in the midst of the greatest trials. Suffering should remind us that this is not our true home, and that we are citizens of heaven.

"The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing" (Ps. 22:1). "In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, because thou hast saved my soul" (Ps. 30:1, 8).

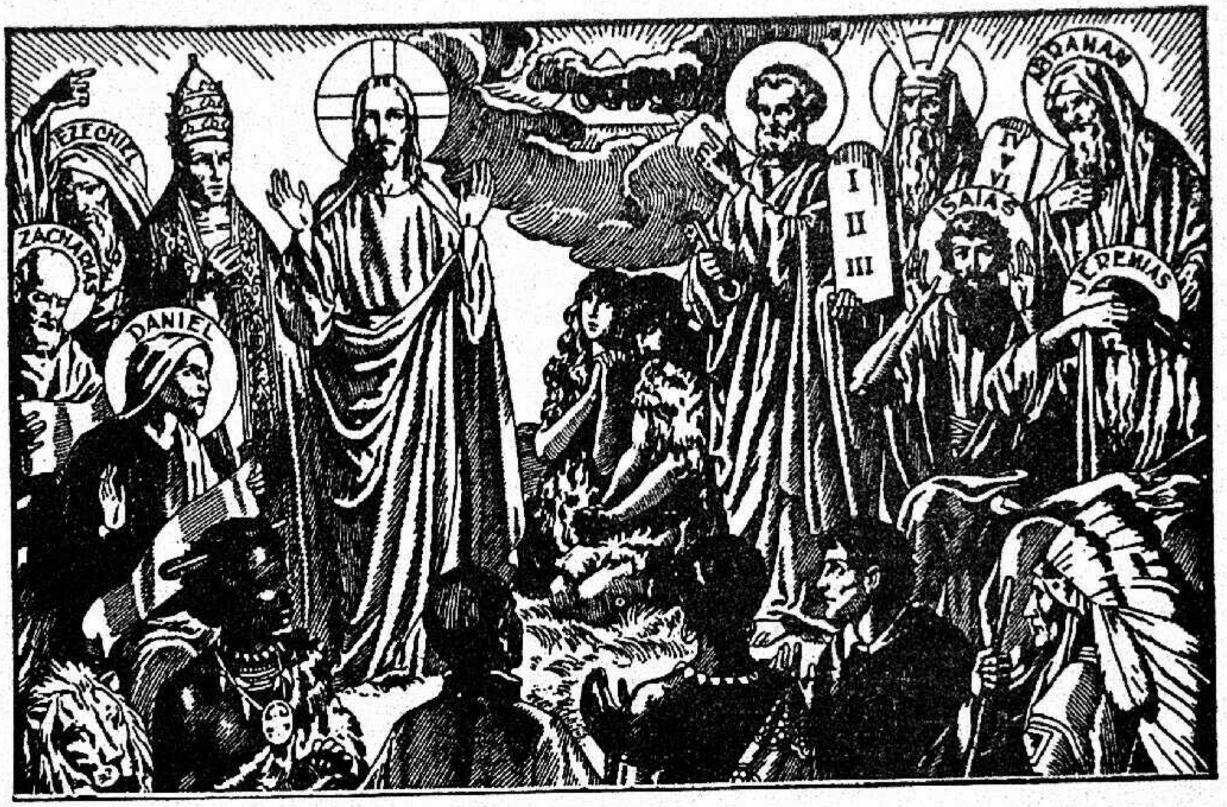
Is God responsible for sin?—God is not responsible for sin; sin is the result of man's wrong use of his free will.

1. God does not will or *cause* sin; He forbids it and will punish the sinner. He permits sin for His own reasons, to sanctify the good, by trying them and giving them opportunities for more faithful obedience.

God created man *free* to choose good or evil. He wishes us to choose good, in order that we may merit heaven. But since we are free, we can, if we so wish, choose evil. God is *not responsible* for our sins.

2. Even the evil that God permits to happen, He turns to our good. He *draws good* out of evil.

The wicked persecutions of the Church make the Gospel better known and loved among the just. Thus the patriarch Joseph said to his brothers, "You thought evil against me, but God turned it into good" (Gen. 50:20). "For those who love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8:28).



Adam and Eve, our first parents, knew God in the Garden of Paradise. God spoke to the patriarchs and prophets, and gave them messages for the rest of men. God gave the Commandments to Moses. Our Lord Jesus Christ, God Himself, came and taught about God.

6. Existence of God

How do we know by our reason that God exists?—We know by our reason that God exists, because of:

1. The existence of the world.
2. The order and harmony of the whole universe.
3. The testimony of our conscience.

How does the existence of the world prove the existence of God?—The existence of the world proves the existence of God, because it could not have come into existence by itself.

1. Everything in the world had a beginning. Men, animals, plants, the earth, planets and stars,—all had a beginning. They could not have come into existence by themselves. They must have been made by ***Someone Who had no beginning.*** Planets and men could no more have made themselves than a watch can make itself.

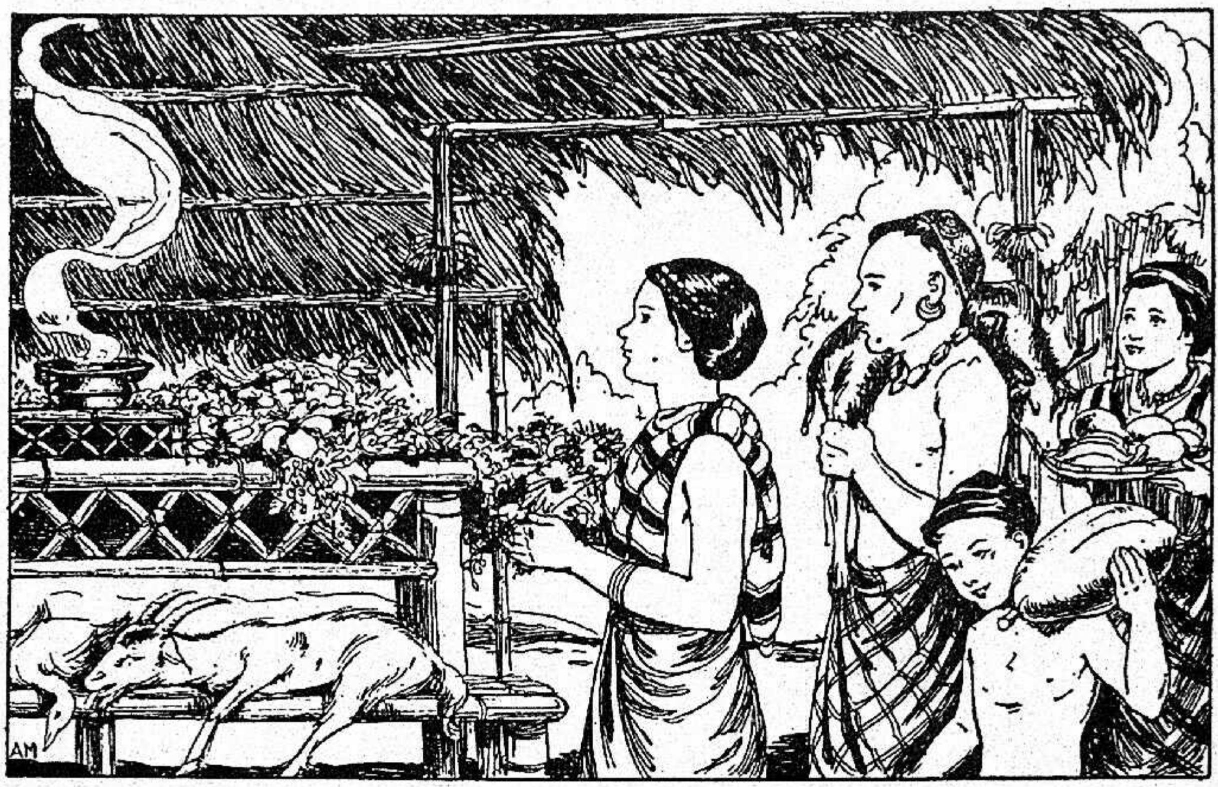
The astronomer Kircher had a friend who denied the existence of God. During a visit one day, this friend saw a globe in the study of the astronomer.—"This is an interesting globe," said he; "Who made it?"—"Why," replied Kircher, "it just made itself!" The friend had a hearty laugh at the idea. Kircher asserted, "It would be much easier for a little globe like that to make itself than for the immense globe of the earth to create itself."

2. When we see footprints on the sand, we conclude that someone has passed that way. The universe is filled with the *footprints of a Supreme Creator.* Every single existing thing or being gives clear testimony of Him.

A light cannot kindle itself; after it is kindled, it will go out in a few hours. But the light of the sun in the heavens has burned for thousands of years and continues to burn.

How do the order and harmony of the universe prove the existence of God?—They lead us to infer the existence of a Supreme Architect and Preserver of surpassing skill.

1. The heavenly bodies go along their appointed courses age after age. The seasons succeed one another year by year. There is



From Adam and Eve down to the present, all men have acknowledged the existence of God. Even pagans and primitive peoples recognize a Supreme Being, a god. They have sacrifices, and they worship some deity whom they recognize as superior and supernatural, on whom man depends.

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splendor, beauty, arrangement, and order everywhere. The whole universe is governed and preserved by ***immutable law.***

If you plant an orange seed, you are certain an apple will not spring from it. Every morning you are sure the sun, when it rises, will appear in the east. At night you can go peacefully to sleep, assured that after your rest the day will come again.

2. To say that this *universal order* is the result of accident, or that the planets direct their own courses, is as foolish as to say that an automobile goes sensibly around the city streets running itself.

"The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands" (Ps. 18:2). God is the Intelligent Cause.

3. Long ago the pagan Cicero said: "When we contemplate the heavens, we arrive at the conviction that they are all guided by a Being of surpassing skill."

And Cicero also says, "There is no nation to be found so savage as to be ignorant of the existence of God." The great astronomer Newton often uncovered and bowed when God's name was uttered.

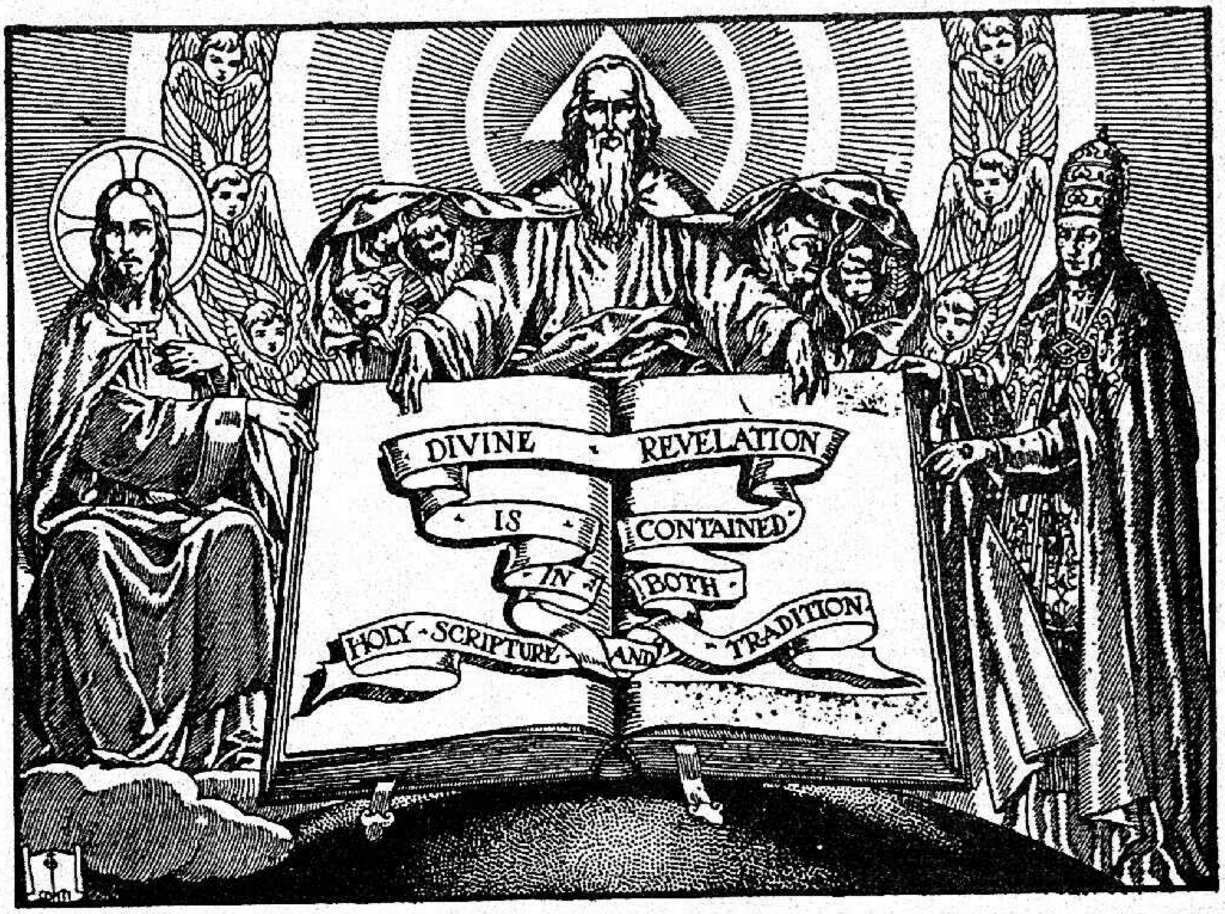
How does the testimony of our conscience prove the existence of God? — By our conscience we can distinguish right from wrong.

1. Our conscience approves the right and condemns the wrong. Thus within ourselves there is a *recognition* of a Supreme Lawgiver to Whom we are responsible, Who will reward the good we do, and punish the evil.

"Only the fool says in his heart: There is no God" (Ps. 13:1).

2. Those who persist in denying the existence of God in spite of external and internal testimony are *atheists* who are eaten up by pride, or live vicious lives, or both. Of them Our Lord said:

"Seeing they do not see and hearing they do not hear, neither do they understand . . .
For the heart of this people has been hardened, and
with their ears they have been hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed;
Lest at any time they see with their eyes, and hear
with their ears, and understand with their mind,
And be converted, and I heal them" (Matt. 13:13-15).



Divine Revelation comes down to us by two means: through Holy Scripture, written down under divine inspiration, and through Tradition, handed down orally from Apostolic times. We read the Bible with great respect, for it is the Word of God. We treat Tradition with as great reverence, for God speaks through Tradition as well. It is wrong to believe the Bible alone without Tradition. That is like believing the Word of God written in the morning and denying it spoken in the afternoon.

7. Divine Revelation

Can we know God in any other way than by our natural reason?—Besides knowing God by our natural reason, we can also know Him from supernatural revelation.

1. God has often revealed Himself to men through means beyond the ordinary course of nature. This is supernatural, or ***Divine Revelation,*** as opposed to the natural revelation of Himself that God makes in the external world, and the revelation He makes through our natural reason and conscience.

Some revealed truths are beyond the power of the human understanding; we could never, by our own abilities, have known such truths if God had not revealed them. For instance, could we by ourselves have known about the Blessed Trinity, had God not revealed it?

2. The public revelation of truths to men by God *began* with Adam and Eve and ended at the death of Saint John the Apostle.

Private revelations have been made to holy persons, such as those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary, and those of Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette. But these private revelations are never proposed to the faithful as *articles of faith.* When the Church approves them, it merely states that there is nothing in them contrary to faith or morals.

How may Divine Revelation be classified?—Divine Revelation may be classified into pre-Christian and Christian revelation.

1. *Pre-Christian* revelation may be divided into:

(a) primitive revelation, made to Adam and Eve;

(b) patriarchal revelation, made to the patriarchs; and

(c) Mosaic revelation, made to Moses and the prophets.

God spoke to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Paradise. He spoke to Abraham, to Noe, sending Noe to preach to sinful men before the Flood. He sent Moses to the Israelites when Pharaoh oppressed them. The patriarchs and prophets were called *messengers of God,* and often received from Him extraordinary powers, of miracles and prophecy, in order that they might be believed.

2. *Christian* revelation contains the truths revealed to us by Jesus Christ, either directly or through His Apostles.

Our Lord *commanded His Apostles* to teach all these truths to the end of time. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

Why should we believe in Divine Revelation? – We should believe in Divine Revelation because God, Who is its Author, cannot deceive nor be deceived.

1. No reasonable man can believe in any truth until he is sure it is *revealed by God.* We know that God is the Author of Revelation because He has proved it by external acts, especially by miracles and prophecies.

The writers who made Divine Revelation known worked under direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Who is, therefore its Author.

2. Miracles are extraordinary works perceptible to the senses, that cannot be accomplished by the mere powers of nature. They are brought about by the *action of a higher power.*

The coming to life of a dead man is a miracle. So is the instantaneous cure of a man blind or paralytic from birth. Our Lord and the Apostles worked many miracles.

3. Some extraordinary works never before heard of or known but invented are *not miracles.* They are mere discoveries of previously unknown processes or combinations.

An example is the radio. And so were the first telegraph, telephone, wireless, phonograph, etc. All of these are very wonderful. Even today people in general do not understand them fully. But they are not miracles, because they are produced by the forces of nature as harnessed through the ingenuity of man.

4. Prophecies are *predictions* of future events that could not have been known by natural means. For the confirmation of the faith, or for the benefit of men, God raised up prophets. Generally speaking, the gift of prophecy is a sure sign that the possessor is a messenger of God.

The prophets told about the coming of the Messias. Their prophecies were fulfilled when Christ came on earth. The major prophets were Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and Daniel. They are distinguished from the twelve minor prophets, because of the greater volume of their prophecies. Forecasting the weather correctly is *not prophecy.* It is the result of a scientific knowledge of natural facts.

How has Divine Revelation come down to us?—Divine Revelation has come down to us through Holy Scripture, written down under divine inspiration, and through Tradition, handed down orally from Apostolic times.

1. From Adam and Eve, at different times, God inspired men to *write down* His revelations. These passed from generation to generation as sacred books.

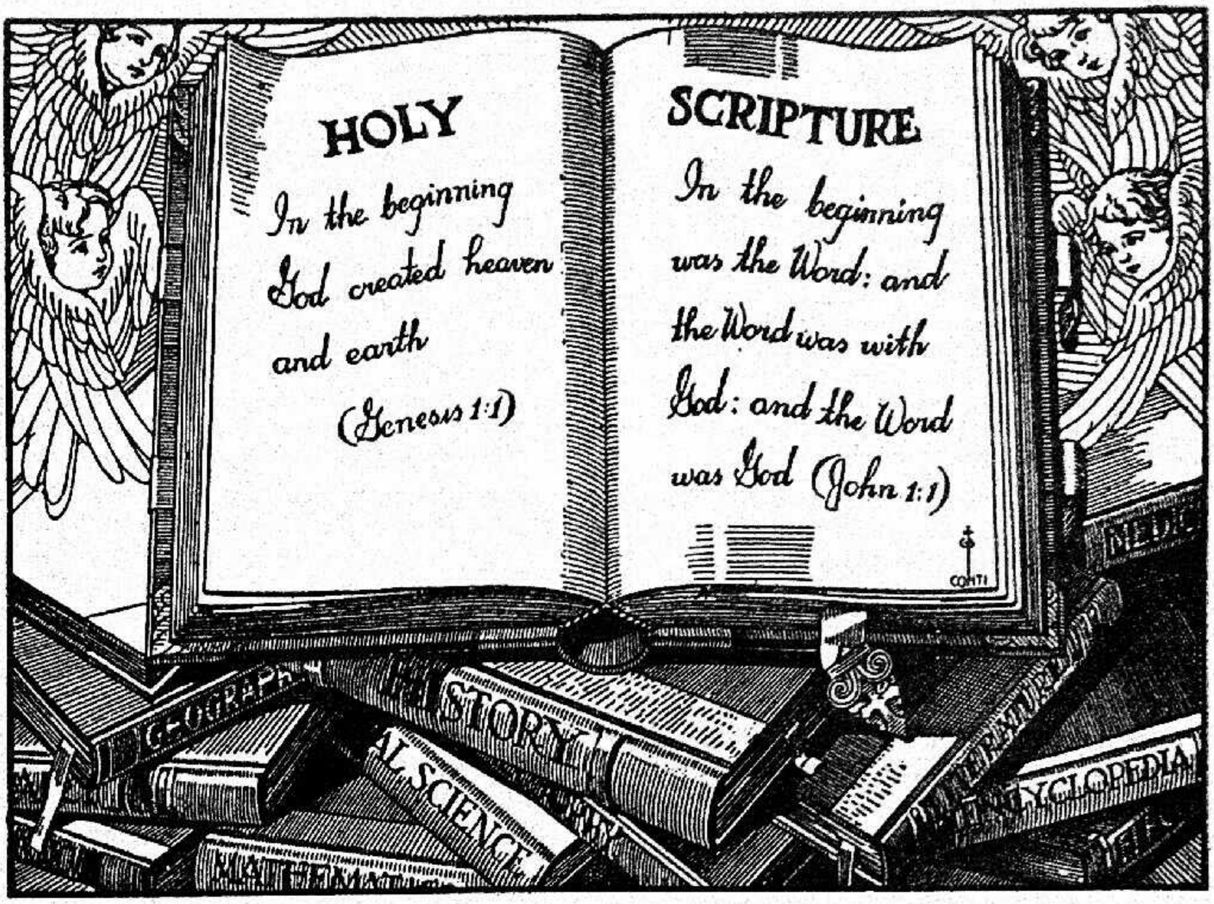
For pre-Christian revelation, there were forty-five of these sacred books, composing the ***Old Testament.*** They were jealously guarded by the Israelites, the Chosen People, whom God Himself had chosen to keep His truths intact for the instruction of future generations.

2. Finally our Lord ***Jesus Christ,*** Son of God, came to earth to reveal Divine truths to men. After His death, His Apostles and disciples wrote about Him and His teachings.

There are twenty-seven of these books, composing the ***New Testament.*** With the forty-five books of the Old Testament they were scattered in different parts of the world, until the Church gathered them together into one Book, ***Holy Scripture,*** or the ***Bible.***

3. The deposit of faith which Jesus Christ entrusted to the Church is made up of two parts: Holy Scripture, and ***Divine Tradition,*** this latter being composed of the truths passed down by word of mouth, and not written down till after the death of Christ's Apostles and disciples, principally by the Fathers of the Church.

Divine Revelation was completed at the death of the last of the Apostles. Since that time *no new revelation* has been made for the instruction of the whole of mankind. Whenever the Church decides a point of faith, it does so according to *Scripture or Tradition.* It simply finds out what has been revealed from the beginning.


HOLY
In the beginning God created heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1)
SCRIPTURE
In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God: and the Word was God (John 1:1)
CONTI
GEOGRAPHY
HISTORY
AL SCIENCE
MATHEMATICS
ENCYCLOPEDIA
MEDIC

The Bible is the best Book in the world. It is the Word of God. It is better than any other book that has ever been written or ever will be written. Catholics are not only permitted, but urged, to read the Bible. They must read a version approved by the Catholic Church. Catholic Bibles have the necessary explanations for the guidance of the faithful. To find a text in the Bible, as Matt. 16:26, turn to the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 16, verse 26. All texts are found in the same manner.

8. Holy Scripture, or The Bible

What is Holy Scripture, or the Bible? — It is the Word of God written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and contained in the books of the Old and the New Testaments.

1. The seventy-two sacred books, together forming the Bible, were composed by *forty writers* in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. The period of composition covers at least 1,300 years, from Moses, to St. John the Evangelist.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1).

2. The writers were *inspired by God*. By a supernatural influence God enlightened their mind and moved their will to write all that He wished, and only that. They acted as free instruments of God, Who directed them and preserved them from error.

The writers of Holy Scripture were, however, *not passive* instruments. Each writer brought his personality with him into what he wrote. The writers were like skilled painters who paint from the same model. The products are similar and all correct, but with differences according to talents.

Is God the Author of the Bible?—Yes, God is the Author of the Bible.

1. An author is not the stenographer that writes down what he is told, but the *one who tells* what is to be written. Since God is the Author, the Bible *cannot contain any error*.

"All Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). Copyists and printers, however, can and do make mistakes in copying the Bible.

2. Since the Bible is the Word of God, it must be treated with the greatest *reverence*.

This is why we take solemn oaths on the Bible, stand up when the Gospel is read, and have incense and lights used when the Gospel is sung at solemn High Mass.

Can the books of the Bible be proved to be reliable historical records?—Yes.

1. *Science* throughout the years has been proving itself the handmaid, instead of the enemy, of the Bible. Recent excavations and researches have proved that such distant events as the Fall of Jericho, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha, and the Deluge, really and actually happened, and are no mere figures of speech.

Sir Charles Marston, the eminent British archaeologist who has worked extensively in Palestine, firmly declares that far from being mere mythology, the Old Testament is, substantially, contemporary eyewitness accounts of events set down as they took place. Remains he has found include information on events that took place in the times of Abraham, Moses, Solomon, and Jeremias the Prophet; even the name of Abraham has been found. Tablets found in Babylonia and Assyria refer to the Deluge.

2. The Old Testament was recognized by *Jesus Christ*, approved by Him, and often quoted by Him. Evidences from the New Testament prove that this was written by Christ's Apostles and disciples.

The style of the Gospels shows clearly that they were written by Jews. That the writers lived in the first century is shown by the vividness of their knowledge about Jerusalem, which was destroyed before the end of that century. The earliest Christian writers testify to the reliability of the Gospels; the consent of the churches of the time proves such reliability.

3. The Gospels have not been *changed* by the passage of centuries. This can be proved from the oldest copies, from ancient translations and quotations. The Gospels could not have been altered, because the fervor of the early Christians carefully guarded them.

When in the fourth century St. Jerome was ordered by Pope Damasus to gather all existing texts of the Bible and translate them into Latin, there were some 35,000 ancient copies. After thirty-four years of labor, he finished the translation, our Catholic Bible, called the Latin Vulgate, from which the Catholic English version has been made.

How is the Bible divided?—The Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament.

1. The ***Old Testament***, written before Christ, consists of forty-five books:

(a) Twenty-one *historical* books relating to the earliest ages of the world, or to the history of the Jews, among which books are the five books of Moses and the four books of Kings;

(b) Seven *doctrinal* books, made up of maxims and prayers, among which are the Psalms and the Proverbs; and

(c) Seventeen *prophetical* books, of four greater and twelve lesser prophets, among which books are Isaias, Jeremias, and Daniel.

2. The ***New Testament***, written after the Resurrection of Christ, consists of twenty-seven books, as follows:

(a) The four Gospels according to Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, containing the story of the life of Christ;

(b) The Acts of the Apostles, by St. Luke, containing the history of the Apostles after the Ascension of Our Lord into heaven;

(c) Twenty-one epistles by Sts. Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude; and

(d) The Apocalypse by St. John.

The four Gospels and the Acts are mainly historical. The Epistles are doctrinal. The Apocalypse is prophetical.

Who are the four Evangelists?—The four Evangelists are Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

1. ***St. Matthew*** was one of the twelve Apostles. Before he followed Our Lord, he was a tax-gatherer or publican called Levi.

Matthew was the first Evangelist to write the Gospel, about *six years after* Our Lord's Ascension. His work, written in Hebrew for the Jews of Palestine, was translated into Greek in the time of the Apostles. His work shows Jesus as proving Himself to be the promised Messias.

2. ***St. Mark*** was the disciple of St. Peter, and wrote according to what he heard from St. Peter himself.

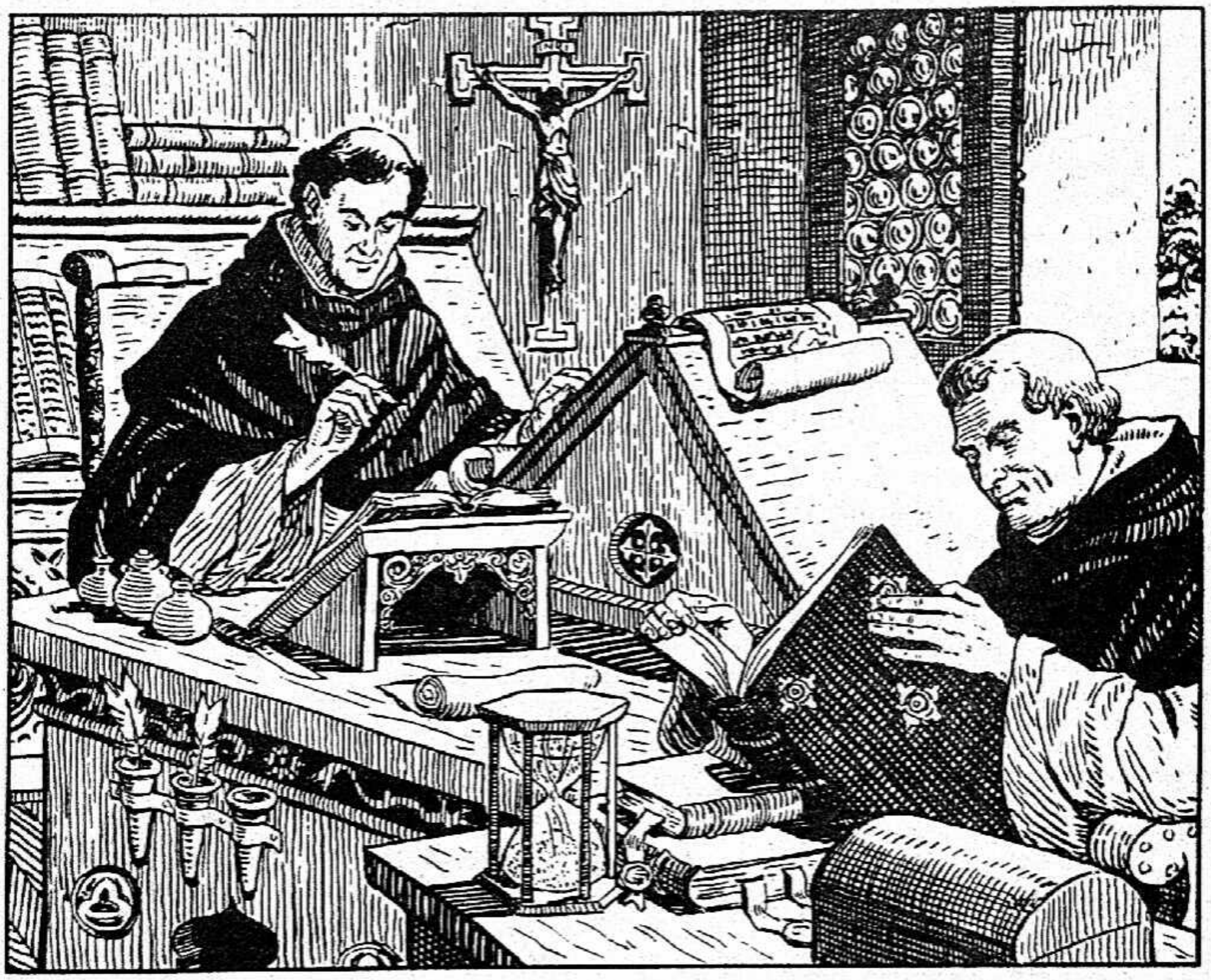
He wrote for the Christians of Rome about *ten years after* Our Lord's Ascension. St. Peter approved what he wrote, which shows Christ as the Son of God.

3. ***St. Luke*** was converted by St. Paul and became his disciple.

He wrote about *twenty-four years after* Our Lord's Ascension, for a distinguished citizen of Rome. His work contains many details about the Blessed Virgin.

4. ***St. John*** was Christ's Beloved Disciple. He wrote about *sixty-three years after* Our Lord's Ascension.

The last of the Apostles to die, he wrote in his old age to testify, against heretics who had arisen, that Jesus Christ is true God.



Before the 15th century when printing was invented, the Bible was reproduced by copying in longhand. We should be very grateful to the monks and nuns of ancient times who labored lovingly, making manuscript copies of old documents that had come down from earliest times. Without this loving care, we would not have our Holy Bible today.

9. Divine Tradition

Are all the truths revealed for us by God found in the Bible?—Not all the truths revealed for us by God are found in the Bible; some are found only in Divine Tradition.

1. The Bible *itself* states that it does not contain all that God revealed.

"There are, however, many other things that Jesus did; but if every one of these should be written, not even the world itself, I think, could hold the books that would have to be written" (John 21:25).

2. The truths of Divine Revelation which have not been written down in Holy Scripture have come to us by the *Tradition* of the Church.

St. Paul bade the Thessalonians: "Hold the teachings that you have learned, whether *by word* or by letter of ours" (2 Thess. 2:15).

What is meant by Divine Tradition?—By Divine Tradition is meant the revealed truths taught by Christ and His Apostles, which were given to the Church only by word of mouth and not through the Bible, though they were put in writing by the Fathers of the Church.

1. In a *wide sense* Tradition embraces the *whole teaching* of the Church, including the Bible, since it is only from the Church that we have the Bible. In a *stricter* sense Tradition includes only what was handed down *orally* from the Apostles.

The Apostles themselves say that there is much that they have delivered to the faithful by word of mouth (2 John 12; 1 Cor. 11:2). Among many examples of truths in Tradition, not clearly manifested in Holy Scriptures, are: the exact number of sacraments, the time of institution of some sacraments, the books that make up the Bible, the Baptism of infants, and Sunday observance.

2. All the truths of Divine Tradition now have found their way into books. From the first Christian centuries the practices and doctrines of Tradition were preserved by saintly teachers whom we call ***Fathers of the Church.*** They were disciples of the Apostles, contemporaries of those disciples, or disciples of the disciples. These holy and learned men instructed the Church in the years of its first growth.

Chief among the Fathers of the first six centuries (*date is of death*) are: the Doctors of the Church (*see below*), and Saints Clement of Rome (99), Ignatius of Antioch (107), Polycarp (155), Justin (165), Irenaeus (202), Cyprian (258), Dionysius (265), Gregory Thaumaturgus (270), Optatus (372), Martin of Tours (397), Gregory of Nyssa (398), Epiphanius (403), Celestine I (432), Vincent of Lerins (450), and Caesarius of Arles (542).

3. Besides the writings of the Fathers, the *truths* of Divine Tradition may be found chiefly in: (a) writings of the ***Doctors*** of the Church; (b) decrees of Popes and Church councils; and (c) the liturgy of the Church as found in the Missal and rituals.

We call "Doctors of the Church" those ecclesiastical writers, noted for learning and holiness of life, who have by Church authority been proclaimed with that title, and whose feasts have been extended to the whole Western Church. Among the *Fathers of the Church,* these are honored as Doctors: Saints Hilary (368), Athanasius (373), Ephraem (378), Basil the Great (379), Cyril of Jerusalem (386), Gregory Nazianzen (389), Ambrose (397), John Chrysostom (407), Jerome (420), Augustine (430), Cyril of Alexandria (444), Peter Chrysologus (450), Leo the Great (461), and Gregory the Great (604).

Among the outstanding Doctors of the Church of the Middle Ages are: Saints Peter Damian (1072), Anselm of Canterbury (1109), Bernard (1153), Thomas Aquinas (1274), Bonaventure (1274), Albert the Great (1280). Of later Doctors we have: Saints Peter Canisius (1597), John of the Cross (1605), Francis de Sales (1612), Robert Bellarmine (1621), Alphonsus Liguori (1787).

Why must Divine Tradition be believed as firmly as the Bible?—Divine Tradition must be believed as firmly as the Bible because it also contains the word of God.

1. Several years passed *before* the Gospels were written down. In the meantime, Christians had to depend on Tradition solely: Tradition is older than the New Testament.

When the books composing the New Testament were written, the various writers had some definite and immediate purpose in mind. For example, St. Paul wrote his Epistles to the various churches of Gentiles that he had converted, to remind them of his teachings in his absence. St. Luke wrote his Gospel for the citizen of Rome, Theophilus, to instruct him in the new religion. St. John's Gospel was to combat heresies denying the divinity of Christ.

2. If the Church teaches any doctrine that *cannot* be found in Holy Scripture, it will be found in Tradition, and therefore traceable to the Apostles.

Those who follow up the course of a river gradually draw near the source, and discover whence the waters flow. In the same way we can trace the historical sources of the teachings of the Church and arrive at their source: the Apostles themselves.

3. Divine Tradition teaches us all the doctrines that were taught by the Apostles. It comes to us from the Apostles. Every single doctrine the Church teaches comes *direct from the Apostles.* The Church does not issue *new* doctrines.

The four Evangelists wrote their relations of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in widely separated places; it is a proof of authenticity that the Gospels agree in their essentials, and often even repeat the very same words. When the writers of the New Testament did begin to write, they did not intend to set down all the details of Catholic faith and practice, but only such points as were immediately interesting or that needed clarification.

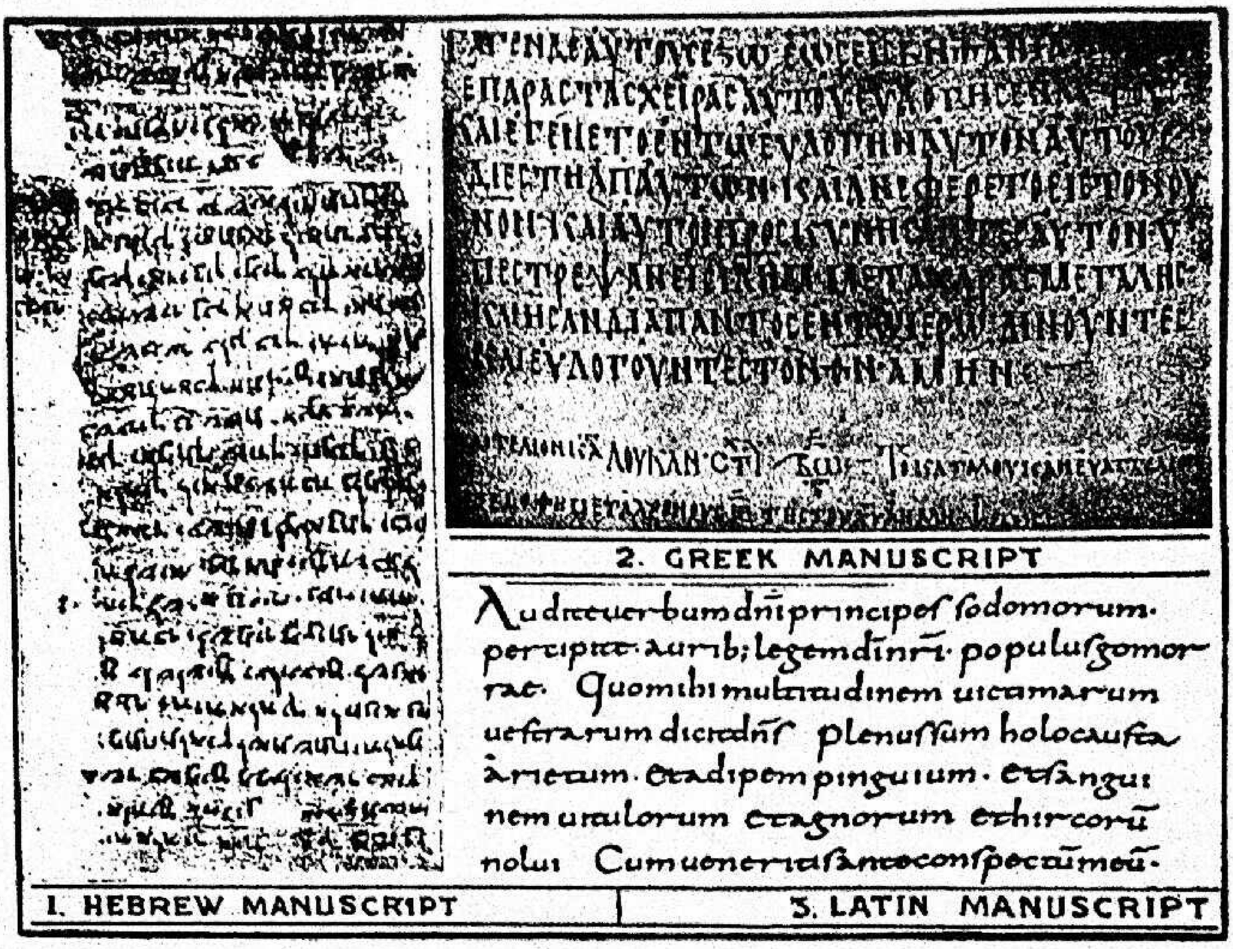
Without Tradition, could we know what the Bible is?—No.

1. Tradition teaches us *what books* belong to the Bible. By tradition the Church kept intact all the books of the Bible for fifteen hundred years before the existence of denominations that nevertheless assert the Church does not care for the Bible.

Protestant denominations *reject Tradition.* Consequently, they cannot agree about which books to include in the Bible. One denomination eliminates one part, other denominations omit other parts, according to the respective private interpretation.

2. Having rejected Tradition, Protestants cannot be *certain* that the books they have accepted are genuine. On whose authority have they accepted what they have? Protestant Bibles, the most popular of which is called the "King James version," *omit all or parts* of the Books of Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Machabees (I and II), and parts of Esther and Daniel.

Luther *rejected the Epistle of St. James,* because the Apostle said that faith without works is dead. Luther and followers omitted the Apocalypse, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistle of St. Jude.



2. GREEK MANUSCRIPT
1. HEBREW MANUSCRIPT
3. LATIN MANUSCRIPT

Audite uerbum dñi principes sodomorum.
percipite aurib; legem dñi nrī. populus gomor
rae. Quo mihi multitudinem uictimarum
uestrarum dicit dñs plenus sum holocausta
arietum. et adipem pinguium. et sangui
nem uitulorum et agnorum et hircorū
nolui Cum ueneritis ante conspectum meū.

Before printing was invented about 1450, books could be reproduced only by making manuscript copies on parchment or sheepskin. A complete Bible cost a fortune, because of the time and expense necessary for copying. Copyists made mistakes, or abbreviations which others misunderstood. The illustration shows manuscripts in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the languages oftenest used in early Bible copies. They give an idea of the difficulties before the invention of printing.

10. The Church and Divine Revelation

Did Christ intend the Gospel to be proclaimed by the circulation of the Bible?—No; it was mainly by preaching that He intended to convert the nations.

Our Lord said: "Go, *make disciples* of all nations." "*Preach* the Gospel to every creature." "He that *heareth* you heareth me." Christ did not say: "Go and make all nations *read* the Bible."

1. The Apostles *never circulated* a single volume of the Bible, but "they went forth and *preached* everywhere, while the Lord worked with them" (Mark 16 : 20). The New Testament was not written till Christianity was already established.

Christ bade His Apostles teach all men "to observe all commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). He commanded them to preach, not necessarily to write.

2. God did not intend Holy Scripture to be our rule of faith independently of a Living Voice. Even under the *Old Law*, the Jews, in spite of their great veneration for Holy Scripture, never dreamed of a private appeal to the Word of God.

When a religious dispute arose, it was decided by the high-priest and the Council. Their decision was to be obeyed under penalty of death. Thus the Jews did not appeal to the dead letter of the law, but to the living voice of the tribunal that God had established.

3. When Christ came on earth, *He did not change* this order of things. On the contrary He commanded the Jews to obey their constituted teachers, however disedifying their *private lives* might be.

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The Scribes and the Pharisees have sat on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, that they command you, observe and do" (Matt. 23:2-3).

4. Until the Protestant outbreak in the *sixteenth century* (1517), no attempt had ever been made to have any people governed by the *dead letter* of the law either in civil or religious affairs.

No one certainly pretends to live in society according to his own private interpretation of the civil laws. When cases come up, they are always decided by a competent tribunal.

Why cannot the Bible be the sole guide to salvation?—It cannot, because:

1. It is *not within the reach* of every one. If it were the only guide, it should be within the reach of every inquirer, for God wishes all men to be saved.

If the Bible were the only guide to eternal salvation the primitive Christians would have been at a disadvantage, for the books that make up the Bible were gathered together only after the Church was established. Even when the parts were put together, for centuries there were very few manuscript copies. Copies remained few till the invention of printing in the fifteenth century.

If the Bible were the only guide to salvation it would be of little help to those unable to read, as well as to the great mass of mankind today, who have neither the knowledge nor the capacity to penetrate the meaning of the written word.

2. The Bible is *difficult to understand*, frequently full of obscurities and difficulties, even for the learned.

St. Peter himself said of the Epistles of St. Paul, that they have "certain things difficult to understand, which the unlearned and unstable distort, just as they do the rest of the Scriptures also, to their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). The Fathers of the Church, who spent their whole lives in the study of the Bible, all pronounce it full of difficulties, needing careful interpretation.

3. The Bible does not contain *all the truths* necessary for eternal salvation.

For example, every Christian is obliged to sanctify Sunday. But nowhere in the whole Bible, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, is there one word *authorizing* the sanctification of Sunday.

On whose authority do we accept the Bible as the Word of God?—We accept the Bible as the Word of God on the authority of the Catholic Church.

1. By God's command, the Catholic Church proclaimed the truths of Divine Revelation, as contained in both ***Holy Scripture*** and ***Tradition.***

Before His Ascension, Our Lord said to the Apostles: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you . . . and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

2. It was the ***Catholic Church*** that in the fourth century declared *which books were inspired* by God and which were not. For fifteen hundred years the Catholic Church was the ***sole guardian*** of the Bible.

The Bible was not always as it is now, a compact book, bound neatly. For several centuries the Bible was in separated fragments, scattered over Christendom. At the same time other books under the name of Scripture were circulated among the faithful.

3. It is the Church that assures us that the *translation* from the original languages is faithful. The Bible needs an interpreter because it is frequently very difficult to understand. The *Catholic Church* alone was *empowered by God* to interpret the Bible. No one is allowed to interpret it contrary to the teaching of the Church.

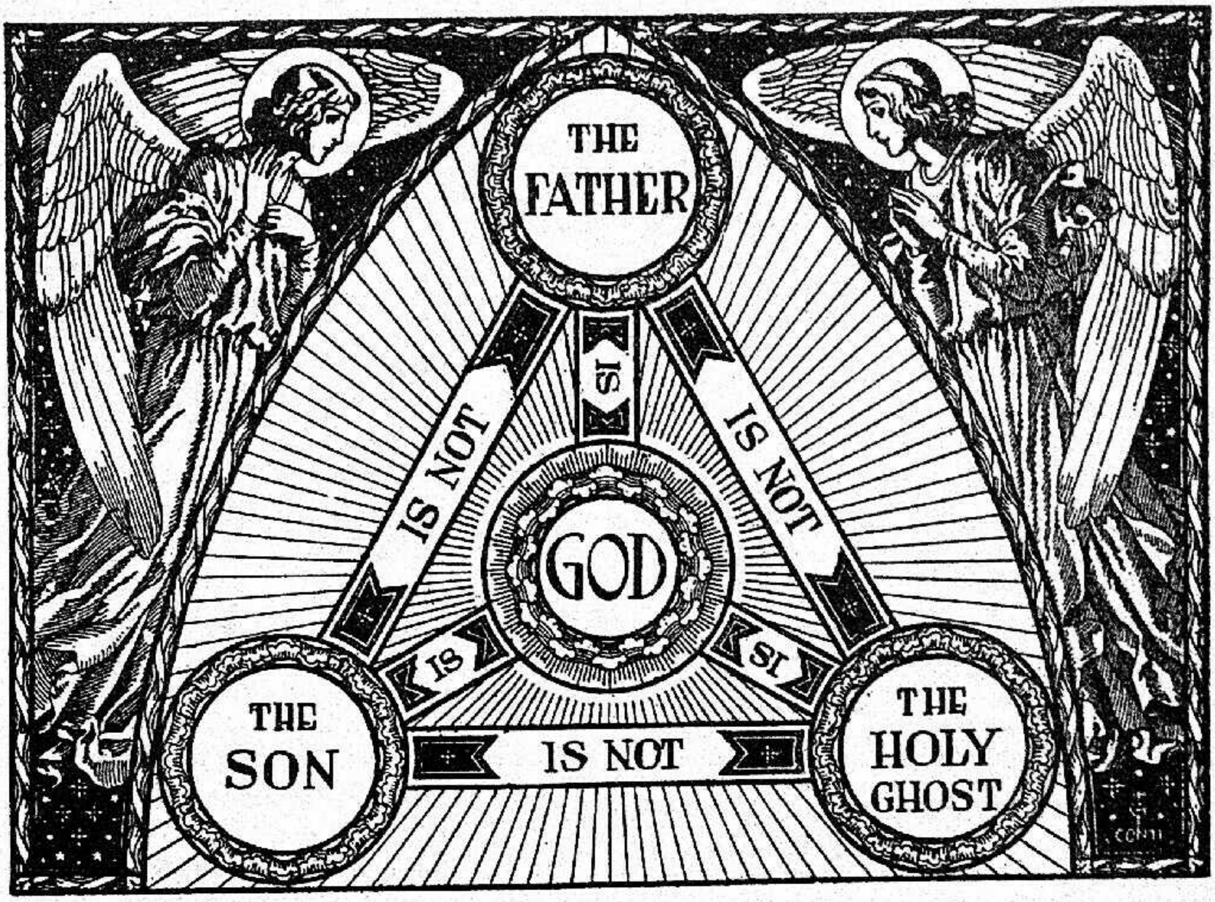
The Protestant denominations who favor private interpretation have *divided and subdivided* for the same reason. No two of them interpret the Bible in the same manner. If we are really to interpret the Bible privately, we must know the original languages in which the books were written. How many can have that knowledge?

Did God intend Holy Scripture to be our rule of faith?—No, God intended our rule of faith to be the *Living Voice* of the ***teaching Church.***

The Apostles and their successors have always taught mankind, especially by preaching. Thus the Church fulfills the command of Jesus Christ, and will fulfill it to the *end of the world*, as He promised. If Our Lord wanted the Bible to be our rule of faith, why did He not write a book, instead of founding a Church?

We can know the true meaning of the doctrines contained in Divine Revelation from the Catholic Church, which has been authorized by Jesus Christ to explain His doctrines, and which is preserved from error in its teachings by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost.

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel to you other than that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8).



A good concrete illustration of the Blessed Trinity is an equilateral triangle. Such a triangle has three sides equal in every way, and yet distinct from each other. There are three sides, but only one triangle. As we see in this illustration, each Divine Person is different from the other two, but all three are God. Each one is God, distinct from the two others, and yet one with them. The three Persons are equal in every way, with one nature and one substance: three Divine Persons, but only one God.

11. One God in Three Persons

Is there only one God?—Yes, there is only one God.

"I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God" (Is. 44:6). There can be only one God, because only one can be supreme, all-powerful, and independent of all.

How many Persons are there in God?—In God there are three Divine Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

1. In speaking of the *"Persons"* in God, we do not use the term in exactly the same way we use it when speaking of people. We use it only for lack of another to show our meaning better.

In speaking of a man as a "person," we mean that he is an intelligent being, acting individually for himself. The acts he performs belong to him and he is responsible for them—he himself, not his tongue, nor his mind, nor his whole body even, but the whole of himself.

We speak of three "Persons" in God because to each belongs something we cannot attribute to any other: His *distinct origin.*

From all eternity the Father begets the Son, and the Son proceeds from the Father. From all eternity the Father and Son breathe forth the Holy Ghost, and He proceeds from Them, as from one Source.

Are the three Divine Persons really distinct from one another?—The three Divine Persons are really distinct from one another.

"So there is One Father, not Three Fathers; one Son, not Three Sons; One Holy Ghost, not Three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity None is afore or after Other, None is greater or less than Another, but the whole Three Persons are Co-eternal together, and Co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped." *(From the Athanasian Creed.)*

1. This is the simplest way by which the *distinct origin* of each Divine Person has been explained: God is a spirit, and the first act of a Spirit is to know and understand. God, knowing Himself from all eternity, brings forth the knowledge of Himself, His own image. This was not a mere thought, as our knowledge of ourselves would be, but a Living Person, of the same substance and one with the Father. *This is God the Son.* Thus the Father "begets" the Son, the Divine Word, the Wisdom of the Father.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

2. God the Father, seeing His own Image in the Son, *loves* the Son; and God the Son loves the Father from all eternity. Each loves the other, because each sees in the other the Infinity of the Godhead, the beauty of Divinity, the Supreme Truth of God. The two Persons loving each other do not just have a thought, as human beings would have, but from Their mutual love is breathed forth, as it were, a Living Person, one with Them, and of Their own substance. *This is God the Holy Ghost.* Thus the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love, proceeds from the Father and the Son.

"But when the Advocate has come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness concerning me" (John 15:26).

3. But we are *not to suppose* that once God the Father begot the Son and now no longer does so, nor that once the love of the Father and the Son for each other breathed forth the Holy Ghost, but now no longer does. These truths are eternal.

God the Father eternally knows Himself, and continues to know Himself, and thus continues to bring forth the Son. God the Father and God the Son continue to love each other, and their delight in each other continues to bring forth the Spirit of Love, God the Holy Ghost. In a similar way, fire has light and color. As long as there is fire, it continues to produce light. As long as there is fire and light, they continue to produce color. But all three exist at one and the same time.

4. In this imperfect way we vaguely see that God must *necessarily* be three Divine Persons, because only in that way can God with His Divine Knowledge and Will be complete in Himself.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to us of the Blessed Trinity when before the Ascension He said to His Apostles: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

What do we mean by the Blessed Trinity?—By the Blessed Trinity we mean one and the same God in three Divine Persons.

1. The Father is God and the First Person of the Blessed Trinity. Omnipotence, and especially the work of *creation*, is attributed to God the Father.

God the Father could have created millions of beings instead of you yourself; but He chose you out of a love wholly undeserved, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3). Let us then cry in thanksgiving, "*Abba*, Father!" (Rom. 8:15). Let us show our gratitude by avoiding all that could displease God the Father, by trying to please Him with virtue, by trying for greater perfection, in obedience to that injunction of Our Lord's: "You therefore are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

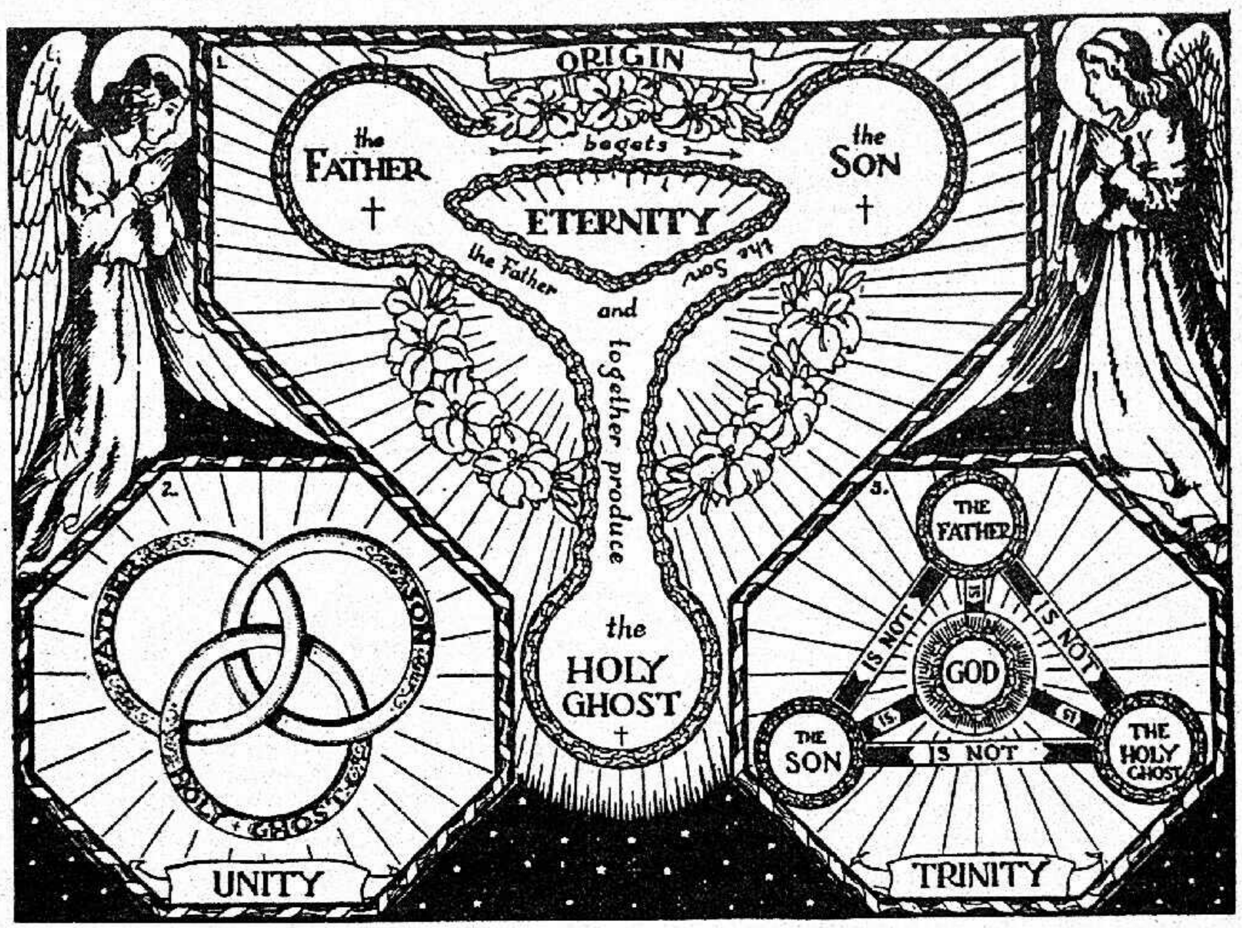
2. The Son is God and the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. To God the Son we owe our *redemption* from sin and eternal death; by His death He gave us life.

For us God the Son debased Himself, taking the form of a servant, ... "becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8). In Holy Communion we are united with Him, for He Himself said; "He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him" (John 6:57). In return we should be "other Christs," and, as the Apostle urged, "walk even as He walked."

3. The Holy Ghost is God and the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. He manifests Himself in us particularly in our *sanctification*. The word "Ghost" applied to the Third Person means "Spirit."

At our Baptism God the Holy Ghost purifies us from all sin and fills our souls with divine grace, so that we become truly children of God, sons and heirs, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ. By Baptism we become living temples of the Holy Ghost: "Or do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

In return for such benefits we should make our body the instrument for the glory of God, keeping it from all stain of sin, adorning it with virtues. "Glorify God and bear him in your body" (1 Cor. 6:20). Let us keep our souls a sanctuary for the Holy Spirit, that God may be happy to dwell in us.



"And the Catholic Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. . . . But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all One, the Glory Equal, the Majesty co-Eternal. . . . The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. . . . And in this Trinity None is afore or after Other, None is greater or less than Another, but the Three Persons are co-Eternal together, and co-Equal" (From Athanasian Creed).

12. Unity of the Blessed Trinity

Are the three Divine Persons perfectly equal to one another?—The three Divine Persons are perfectly equal to one another, because all are one and the same God.

"Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father Uncreated, the Son Uncreated, and the Holy Ghost Uncreated. The Father Incomprehensible, the Son Incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost Incomprehensible. The Father Eternal, the Son Eternal, and the Holy Ghost Eternal, and yet they are not Three Eternals but One Eternal. As also there are not Three Uncreated, nor Three Incomprehensibles, but One Uncreated, and One Incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not Three Almighties, but One Almighty." *(From the Athanasian Creed.)*

All three Persons are *equal in every way,* equal in power and glory. The attributes and external works of God are common to all three Persons. However, in *human speech* we attribute certain works to each Person.

Thus we attribute to the Father the works of Creation, to the Son the work of Redemption, and to the Holy Ghost the work of sanctification. In reality these works belong equally to all three.

How are the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, one and the same God?—The three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God because all have one and the same Divine nature.

1. *Each* of the Divine Persons is God.

"So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords but one Lord. For, like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the Catholic Religion to say, there be three Gods or three Lords." (*From the Athanasian Creed.*)

2. There are three Persons, but only *one Being.* The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Ghost. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is neither the Father nor the Son.

It was the Son Who became man and died for us, not the Father or the Holy Ghost. But when we receive God the Son in Holy Communion, we also spiritually receive God the Father and God the Holy Ghost. The Blessed Trinity then dwells in us as in a Temple.

Can we fully understand how the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God?—We cannot fully understand how the three Divine Persons, though really distinct from one another, are one and the same God, because this is a supernatural mystery.

1 A supernatural *mystery* is a truth which we cannot fully understand, but which we firmly believe because we have God's word for it. A supernatural mystery is above reason, but not contrary to it. No man can explain a mystery; neither can anyone know it unless it is revealed by God. "Great art thou, O Lord, in counsel, and incomprehensible in thought" (Jer. 32:19).

It is not unreasonable to believe in a supernatural mystery. There are many natural mysteries around us that no one has yet been able to explain, yet we believe them: electricity, magnetism, force, and many of the processes of life.

2. The doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is a *strict mystery;* that is, we cannot learn it from reason, nor understand it completely, even after it has been revealed to us.

The doctrine contains two truths our reason cannot fully understand: (1) that there is only one God; and (2) that each of the three Persons is God. We can understand each of these truths separately, but not when taken together.

3. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is *not a contradiction.* We do not say that there are three gods in one God, nor that the three Divine Persons are one Person.

We only say that there are three Persons in one God, that is, three Persons, and one nature or essence. Somewhat similarly, the soul of man has will, understanding, and memory, but it is only one soul. Also, the sun has form, light, and heat, but is only one sun. Three flames put together make only one flame.

Why do we believe in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity?—We believe in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity because God Himself revealed it to us.

"Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17). The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is the greatest of all mysteries. We believe it because God has revealed it to us, but we cannot fully understand it. It would be foolish to refuse to believe just because we cannot understand; that would be like a blind man who refuses to believe there is a sun, because he cannot see it. Is God limited because we are?

1. The Jews did not *explicitly* believe in the Blessed Trinity, although there are references to the mystery in the Old Testament.

Before making man, God said: "Let Us make man to Our own image" (Gen. 1:26). David says: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand."

2. *Our Lord* Jesus Christ revealed the mystery. He said:

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). "But when the Advocate has come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness concerning me" (John 15:26).

3. The Blessed Trinity *manifested* Itself at the baptism of Jesus Christ.

God the Father spoke from the heavens; God the Son was baptized; God the Holy Ghost descended in visible form, in the form of a dove.

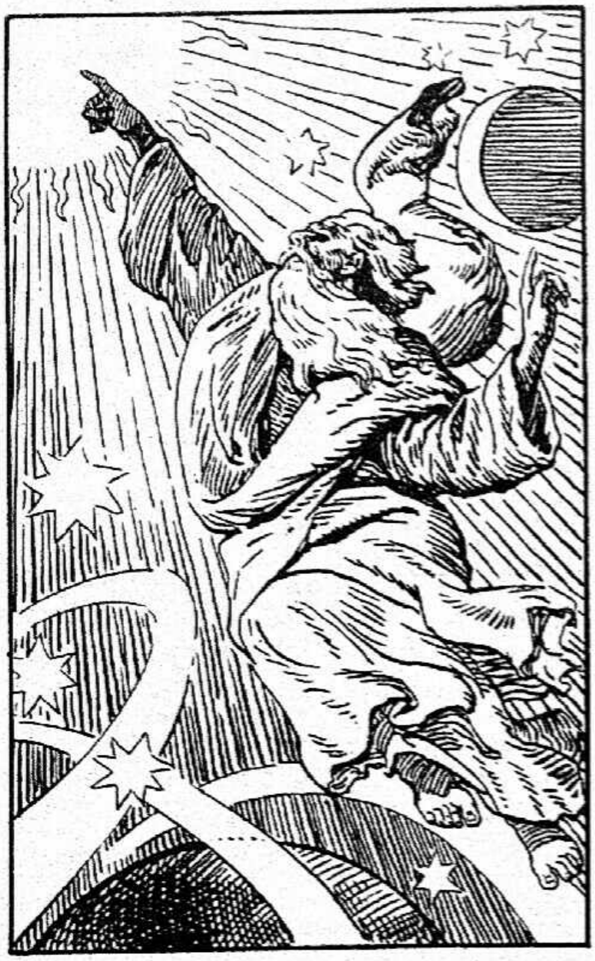
When do we profess our faith in the Blessed Trinity?—We profess our faith in the Blessed Trinity especially when we make the sign of the cross.

1. We also honor the Blessed Trinity every time we say the *doxology* or "prayer of praise": "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end."

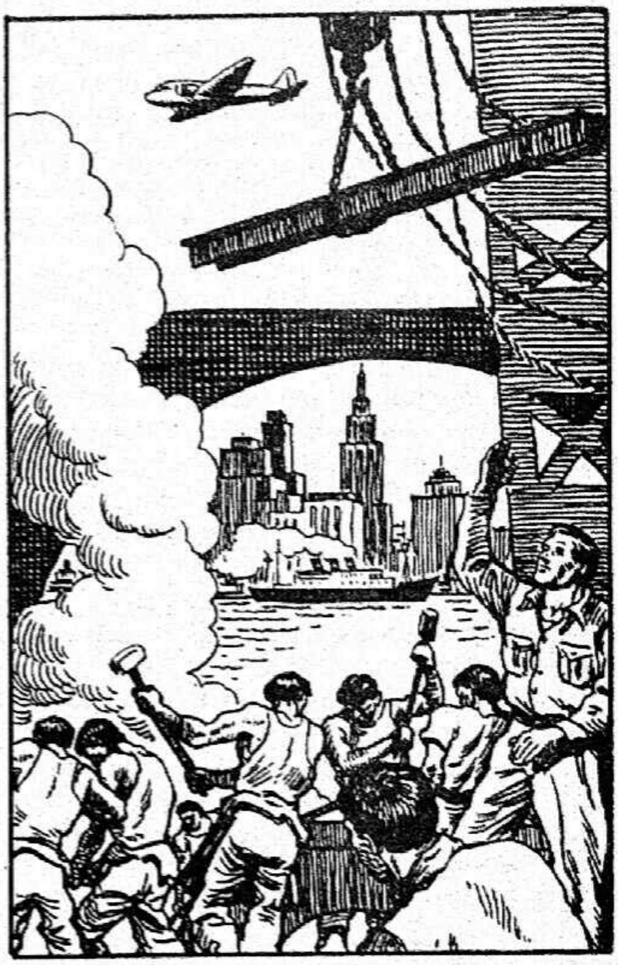
The Feast of the Blessed Trinity, called Trinity Sunday, is kept on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

2. All the *sacraments* are administered in the name of the Blessed Trinity.

On our death-bed the Church through the priest will comfort us with the words: "Even though he hath sinned, he hath not denied the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."



God is almighty. He can make anything from nothing, by a mere act of His divine will. It was thus that He created the heavens and earth and everything that is in them. Man can make many wonderful things, but he must make them out of something.



He must use the things God created. Before he can make a stone house, he must have stone, cement, brick, etc. But God needs nothing to make anything. Only God could create the very first thing or matter in the universe.

13. Creation

What do we mean when we say that God is the Creator of heaven and earth?— When we say that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, we mean that He made all things from nothing by His almighty power.

"All things were made through him, and without him was made nothing" (John 1:3) "For in him were created all things" (Col. 1:16).

1. In the beginning God alone lived. Then *out of nothing*, by His almighty power, He created heaven and earth, and all things in heaven and on earth. Only God can *create;* that is, He alone can make something out of nothing. Time began with this creation. Before it there was only eternity.

"Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed, from eternity Thou art God" (Ps. 89:2).

2. God created heaven and earth, and everything in heaven and earth. By this is meant *everything* which is not God. "Heaven" refers to the angels and their abode; and "earth" to all the material universe, including the earth, stars, planets, and all things and beings in them.

God created everything by an *act of his will*. "He spoke and they were made: he commanded and they were created" (Ps. 32:9).

3. In its first book, Genesis, Holy Scripture tells the story of Creation. In the beginning all was void and empty and dark; that is, there was nothing but *chaos*, which

God Himself had created. Then out of this chaos God brought about *order and law,* creating heaven and earth.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved over the waters" (Gen. 1:1-2).

In how many days did God create the world?—God created the world in six days, resting on the seventh day.

1. These "days" of creation were not necessarily days of twenty-four hours like those we have today, since our sun had not yet appeared. Catholic theologians commonly interpret them as *long periods of time.* Thus the "seventh day" is still going on. For Holy Scripture says that on that day God rested; that is, He ceased to create new kinds of things.

The Hebrew word for "day" may stand for a day, a week, a month, a century, or any indefinite period of time. *Fundamentalism* is an enemy of Science; it takes the "days" of Creation as of 24-hour periods, like the periods we call "days" in our time.

2. Very probably the sacred writer divides creation into six days in order to *consecrate* each day of the week by connecting it with one or more of the Creator's works; and to impress on the Jews the divine command to *sanctify* the seventh day.

In the creation, God worked from the lower to the higher: He first made plants, and then He created the animals that would use them for food. Man was the crown of His earthly creations; all other works in the material universe, were for man's enjoyment and use.

(*a*) On the *first* day, God said: "Be light made," and light was made. Then He divided light from darkness, and called the light Day and the darkness Night. On the *second* day, God made the sky or firmament and divided the waters.

The "heaven" thus made is the material heaven in which the stars, the moon, and the sun pursue their courses.

(*b*) On the *third* day, God made dry land to appear, bade it bring forth plants.

In its account Holy Scripture concerns itself chiefly with our earth. Originally a fiery ball of gaseous matter, it gradually lost its heat, and land began to appear, apart from the sea. The moisture and warmth encouraged the development of organic life, the beginning of which had been implanted by God in the original primary matter.

(*c*) On the *fourth* day, God made the sun, moon, and stars. On the *fifth* day He made creeping things, birds, and fishes. On the *sixth* day, He made beasts and cattle. Finally, "God created man to His own image."

Man is different from the animals in his possession of reason and free will. Surpassing them all in dignity, he is the crown of God's creations, the one for whom the world had been made ready.

(*d*) On the *seventh* day, God "rested . . . from all His work which He had done."

On the seventh day God ceased to make new kinds of things. This "seventh day" continues to the present; everything that is "made" now is a development or a combination of already existing matter. It is true that "nothing is new under the sun. However, God continues to work in this sense: that He preserves and governs created things, and that He creates souls for those to be born.

Is there no contradiction between the account in the book of Genesis, and the latest discoveries of science, concerning the origin of matter?—No, there is not the least contradiction between the account in the book of Genesis, and the latest discoveries of science, concerning the origin of matter.

An apparent contradiction arises through the mistake of uninformed persons, who forget that the Church reads the Bible bearing in mind *the principal object of the sacred writers.*

1. In writing the account of the creation, the sacred writer, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, wished to impress upon the Jews (for whom he was writing) that there is *but one God,* and that He created the entire universe, living and lifeless.

At that time the Jews were surrounded by idolatrous peoples who believed in the existence of many gods, and worshipped all kinds of creatures, even the sun, moon, plants, animals, and images.

2. In pursuing his aim, the sacred writer used the *form that was most effective,* under the circumstances, to convey his meaning. It is a *popular form*: that is, it relates historical events in popular expression and order.

The words used, while in themselves not scientifically exact, are in conformity with *ordinary speech,* and understandable by ordinary people. In the same way today we say, "The sun rises in the east", even when we know through the investigations of science that the sun does not "rise" at all. Events are set down in an order not necessarily scientific, but suited to the understanding of a primitive people, and therefore of all mankind. We must remember that the sacred writer was not aiming to teach physics or anthropology, but Faith.

SOME CATHOLIC SCIENTISTS

As a practical demonstration that there is no contradiction between Divine Revelation and Science, we here list some of the thousands of scientists who through the ages have been practising members of the Catholic Church and at the same time outstanding in Science. These men not only found no conflict between science and religion, but became more firm in their faith as they delved deeper into science. As Marconi, one of the greatest scientists of our time, declared: "Science alone is unable to explain many things, and most of all, the greatest of mysteries—the mystery of our existence. I believe, not only as a Catholic, but also as scientist."We do not include here the names of Catholics preeminent in navigation, architecture, art, music or literature, limiting ourselves to natural and physical science.

Algué, a priest, invented the barocyclonometer, to detect approach of cyclones.

Ampere was founder of the science of electrodynamics, and investigator of the laws of electro-magnetism.

Becquerel, *Antoine Cesar,* was the founder of electro-chemistry.

Becquerel, *Antoine Henri,* was the discoverer of radio-activity.

Binet, mathematician and astronomer, set forth the principle, "Binet's Theorem."

Braille invented the Braille system for the blind.

Buffon wrote the first work on natural history.

Carrell, Nobel prize winner in medicine and physiology, is renowned for his work in surgical technique.

Caesalpinus, a Papal physician, was the first to construct a system of botany.

Cassiodorus, a priest, invented the watch.

Columbo discovered the pulmonary circulation of the blood.

Copernicus, a priest, expounded the Copernican system.

Coulomb established the fundamental laws of static electricity.

De Chauliac, a Papal physician, was the father of modern surgery and hospitals.

De Vico, a priest, discovered six comets.

Descartes founded analytical geometry.

Dumas invented a method of ascertaining vapor densities.

Endlicher, botanist and historian, established a new system of classifying plants.

Eustachius, for whom the Eustachian tube was named, was one of the founders of modern anatomy.

Fabricius discovered the valvular system of the veins.

Fallopius, for whom the Fallopian tube was named, was an eminent physiologist.

Fizeau was the first to determine experimentally the velocity of light.

Foucault invented the first practical electric arc lamp; he refuted the corpuscular theory of light; he invented the gyroscope.

Fraunhofer was initiator of spectrum analysis; he established laws of diffraction.

Fresnel contributed more to the science of optics than any other man.

Galilei, a great astronomer, is the father of experimental science.

Galvani, one of the pioneers of electricity, was also an anatomist and physiologist.

Gioja, father of scientific navigation, invented the mariner's compass.

Gramme invented the Gramme dynamo.

Guttenberg invented printing.

Herzog discovered a cure for infantile paralysis.

Holland invented the first practical submarine.

Kircher, a priest, made the first definite statement of the germ theory of disease.

Laennec invented the stethoscope.

Lancist, a Papal physician, was the father of clinical medicine.

Latreille was pioneer in entomology.

Lavoisier is called Father of Modern Chemistry.

Leverrier discovered the planet Neptune.

Lully is said to have been the first to employ chemical symbols.

Malpighi, a Papal physician, was a botanist, and the father of comparative physiology.

Marconi's place in radio is unsurpassed.

Mariotte discovered Mariotte's law of gases.

Mendel, a monk, first established the laws of heredity, which gave the final blow to the theory of natural selection.

Morgagni, founder of modern pathology; made important studies in aneurisms.

Muller was the greatest biologist of the 19th century, founder of modern physiology.

Pashcal demonstrated practically that a column of air has weight.

Pasteur, called the "Father of Bacteriology," and inventor of bio-therapeutics, was the leading scientist of the 19th century.

Picard, a priest, was the first to measure accurately a degree of the meridian.

Regiomontanus, a Bishop and Papal astronomer, was the father of modern astronomy.

Scheiner, a priest, invented the pantograph, and made a telescope that permitted the first systematic investigation of sun spots.

Secchi invented the meteorograph.

Steensen, a Bishop, was the father of geology.

Theodoric, a Bishop, discovered anasthesia in the 13th century.

Torricelli invented the barometer.

Vesalius was the founder of modern anatomical science.

Volta invented the first complete galvanic battery; the "volt" is named after him.

Other scientists: Agricola, Albertus Magnus, Bacon, Bartholomeus, Bayma, Beccaria, Behalm, Bernard, Blondo, Biot, Bolgano, Borrus, Boscovitch, Bosio, Bourgeois, Branly, Caldani, Cambou, Camel, Cardan, Carnoy, Cassini, Cauchy, Cavaliere, Caxton, Champollion, Chevreul, Clavius, De Rossi, Divisch, Dulong, Dwight, Eckhel, Epee, Fabre, Fabri, Faye, Ferrari, Gassendi, Gay-Lussac, Gordon, Grimaldi, Hauy, Heis, Helmont, Hengler, Heude, Hilgard, Jussieu, Kelly, Lamarck, Laplace, Linacre, Malus, Mersenne, Monge, Muller, Murphy, Murray, Nelston, Nieuwland, Nobili, Nollet, Ortelius, Ozaman, Pelouze, Piazzi, Pitra, Plumier, Pouget, Provancher, Regnault, Riccioli, Sahagun, Santorini, Schwann, Schwarz, Secchi, Semmelweis, Spallanzani, Takamine, Tieffentaller, Toscanelli, Tulasne, Valentine, Vernier, Vieta, Da Vinci, Waldseemuller, Wincklemann, Windle, and a host of others, too many to mention.

14. Revelation and Science

Do Revelation and Science contradict each other?—No; Revelation and Science do not, and cannot, contradict each other, for both are of God.

1. There may at times be an *apparent conflict* between faith and science; but this is only apparent, and never real. God cannot contradict Himself. He cannot lead us into error.

True Science is the handmaid of Religion. Science and the scientific method are means of arriving at the truth, and Religion is Truth. The greatest scientists have been Christians; a majority of outstanding leaders in science were Catholics, and many were priests. Only the shallow dabblers in science absurdly pretend that there is a conflict. The apparent conflicts arise from *false interpretations,* as when one takes for scientific truth what is false or not proved, or accepts as a doctrine of faith something not taught by the Church.

2. There can never be a real conflict between Revelation and Science, because they deal with entirely *different spheres.* Revelation is concerned with Faith and spiritual things; physical Science is concerned only with material things.

The Bible's purpose is to teach salvation; but people make the mistake of considering it a treatise on Science. St. Thomas and St. Augustine taught that when the Bible describes some phenomenon of nature, it sets it down in terms of its *appearances.*

3. No scientific experiment or theory can *dispense* with the necessity of a Creator. Unless His existence is accepted, we can never explain: (a) the origin of matter, even the most elementary; (b) the origin of motion; (c) the origin of the very first living organism, and of the spiritual soul of man; and (d) the origin of the order and law so apparent in the universe.

What are the only difficulties found by some scientists in the Biblical account of the creation?—The only difficulties found by some scientists in the Biblical account of the Creation are connected with the order or sequence of events followed in the Book of Genesis.

1. If we study the proper interpretation, even these difficulties will be found *not to exist.*

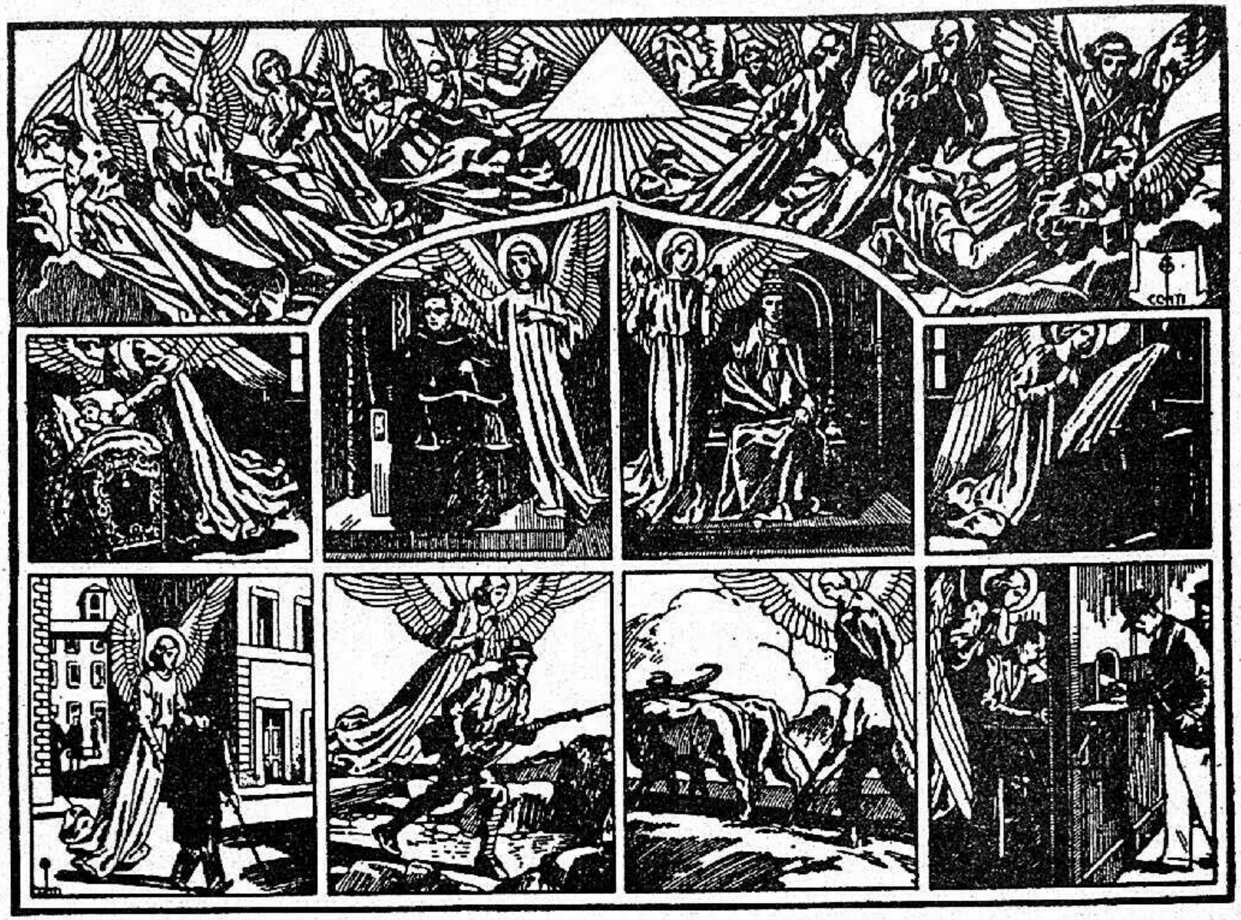
The account in the Book of Genesis is in *logical, not chronological,* order. The writer groups together similar works of creation, for the easier understanding of a primitive people.

2. The Church has not made any positive *definition* of the way in which the Biblical account of Creation is to be interpreted.

Catholics are *free to accept* the interpretation that they prefer, so long as they also accept the fact taught: that God created the whole universe and everything in it.

3. Neither Revelation nor Science gives a definite answer to the question concerning the age of the world. Geologists assert that *long periods of time* were necessary for the formation of the various strata of the earth's surface. Astronomers assert that some stars are *a million light-years* from the earth.

A Catholic is free to hold on this point whatever he believes is a sound and scientific conclusion. The estimates of scientists vary.



Whoever we are, wherever we are, each of us has always a guardian angel at our side. He sees everything we do: both good and evil. We should always be very careful not to offend or hurt him.

We should often thank him for his love and care. We should ask him to intercede with God for us in our necessities. We should pray to him often, especially in temptation or danger.

15. The Angels

Which are the chief creatures of God?—The chief creatures of God are angels and men.

1. God created angels and men for His own external *glory*. Their creation was a reflection of His wisdom and greatness.

By reason alone we cannot know that angels exist. However, reason indicates that in the orderly sequence of creatures from the lowest to the highest, there would be a greater gap between man and God, did not the angels exist.

2. God created angels and men for their good and happiness. They find their happiness in their *union* with God. God did not create angels or men for His own happiness; He is perfectly happy in Himself alone.

What are angels?—Angels are created spirits, without bodies, having understanding and free will.

Angels are spiritual beings superior to man and inferior to God; this is of faith. We do not know the number of angels, but we can infer from Holy Scripture that their number is very great.

1. Before the creation of man, God created hosts of angels. They are *pure spirits*, without bodies, in contrast to men, who have both body and spirit.

When angels or devils appear to men, they assume human form or some other visible shape. Thus the angels that appeared to the Blessed Virgin and to Zachary assumed human form. The devil that tempted Eve appeared as a serpent.

2. Even *demons* are pure spirits. They were angels before they became devils.

The word "angel" means messenger, and angels have often been sent by God to make known His will to men. Even the devils do service to God, since God always turns the attacks of the devil to show forth more brightly His own glory.

What gifts did God bestow on the angels when He created them?—When God created the angels He bestowed on them great wisdom, power, and holiness.

1. Angels are the *most excellent* beings created by God. They are nobler in nature than men. They know more, and have greater power. Of all God's creatures, angels resemble Him most.

We can imply the knowledge of the angels from the words of Our Lord: "But of that day (the day of Judgment) and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36). The power of angels was shown in Egypt when one destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians; another angel destroyed the hosts of the Assyrian King, for blaspheming God.

2. The angels were not created equal. They rank according to the amount of gifts given, and the work assigned to them.

In the Bible nine choirs of angels are mentioned: seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominations, virtues, powers, principalities, archangels, and angels.

Did all the angels remain faithful to God?—Not all the angels remained faithful to God; some of them sinned.

1. God gave *free will* to the angels, as He did to men. He put them to a test, in order to make them earn the happiness of heaven.

We do not know the exact nature of the test which God gave the angels.

2. In this trial, many angels, using their free will, *refused to submit* themselves to God; for this serious sin they were punished.

"For God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but dragged them down by infernal ropes" (2 Pet. 2:4). Wherever the devils were later permitted to go, they had in a way their hell with them, for they were forever deprived of the love of God.

What happened to the angels who remained faithful to God?—The angels who remained faithful to God entered into the eternal happiness of heaven, and these are called good angels.

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, their angels in heaven always behold the face of my Father" (Matt. 18:10).

1. The good angels behold the face of God continually, praise and glorify Him, and are *perfectly happy* in His presence.

Angels are commonly represented with *wings* to show the speed with which they pass from place to place. They are also shown as small children to show their innocence and perpetual youth. They have harps, to indicate their perpetual praise of God, and lilies, to symbolize their perfect purity.

2. When we say that the angels were in *heaven* before their test, we do not mean that they *saw God*. They were very happy where God had placed them, but they did not see God until they had been proved.

How do the good angels help us?—The good angels help us by praying for us, by acting as messengers from God to us, and by serving as our guardian angels.

Our Lord Himself said of little children: "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, their angels in heaven always behold the face of my Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).

1. The good angels are God's *messengers*, and often reveal God's will to man.

The angel Raphael accompanied Tobias on his journey. The angel Gabriel was sent to the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Annunciation. Angels appeared to the shepherds at the Nativity. An angel was sent to St. Joseph after the departure of the Magi, and after the death of Herod. Angels appeared to the women at Christ's sepulchre, and to Mary Magdalen.

2. Certain angels have *special charge* of nations, communities, churches, etc.

Our Lord Himself several times spoke of angels, especially the guardian angels.

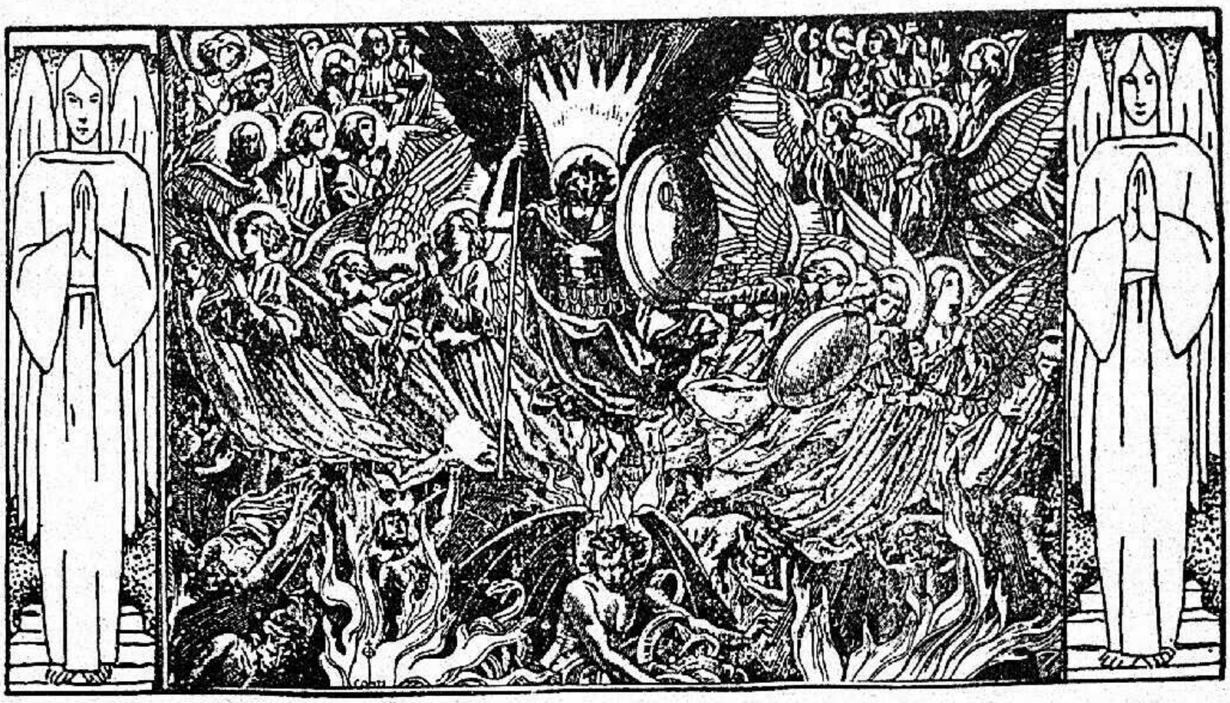
How do our guardian angels help us?—Our guardian angels help us by praying for us, by protecting us from harm, and by inspiring us to do good.

1. Our guardian angels are given *special care* of us, watching over each from birth to death.

We should always love and pray to our Guardian Angel who never leaves our side. The Church celebrates the *feast* of the Guardian Angels on October 2.

2. Our *guardian angels* put good thoughts into our minds, moving our will to what is good. They protect us in dangers of soul and body. They offer our prayers and good works to God. They pray for us. They help us in our work and needs.

"He hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. 90:11). For instance, angels kept Daniel safe in the lions' den, and the three young men in the fiery furnace. We often hear of little children meeting with accidents and escaping unhurt. But the chief work of our guardian angels is to keep us safe from the devil.



It was the archangel Michael who led the good angels: "And there was a great battle in heaven; Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven" (Ap. 12:7, 8).

16. The Devils; Temptation

What happened to the angels who did not remain faithful to God?—The angels who did not remain faithful to God were cast into hell, and these are called bad angels, or devils.

"Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

1. We also call them *demons* or *fallen angels*. Led by the most excellent of the angels created by God, Lucifer or Satan, the bad angels *refused to obey* God when He tested them. God did not give them a chance to repent, but cast them at once into hell.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer.... Thou saidst in thy heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, ... I will be like the Most High,'" (Is. 14:12-14). Jesus said, "I was watching Satan fall as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

2. God did not create devils, but glorious angels. The rebel angels *turned themselves into devils* by their sin.

By one grave sin against God these angels of light became vile demons, and were condemned to hell for all eternity. We should draw a lesson from this and determine never to sin.

What is the chief way in which the bad angels try to harm us?—The chief way in which the bad angels try to harm us is by tempting us to sin.

1. The bad angels *tempt* man and try to draw him away from God. Often the devil appears as an angel of light, and we are tempted by evil which appears good. Under this guise the devil is most dangerous.

"Be sober, be watchful! For your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet 5:8-9).

2. Without God's permission, the devil can do us no harm. God sometimes permits the devil to tempt just men, to *cleanse* them from imperfections.

Our Lord Himself was tempted by the devil. God permitted Job to be harmed bodily by the devil. Saint Anthony, Saint Teresa, and many other saints suffered from the temptations of the evil one. But these temptations only drive the just to greater love of God. "The life of man is a warfare" (Job. 7:1).

3. Sometimes devils are permitted to *enter* the body of a man, exercising power over his faculties; this is called diabolic

"possession". At other times devils torment one from without; and this state is called diabolic "obsession".

When God permits diabolic obsession or possession, it is to show in some way His glory, or to punish sin, convert sinners, or provide some means for the practice of virtue.

4. In cases of diabolic possession or obsession, the aid of the Church should be sought; for the Church received from Christ the power of *exorcism.* This is the act of driving out or warding off evil spirits.

It is only with the permission of his bishop that a priest is permitted to exorcise evil spirits.

5. The Church forbids Catholics to have anything to do with ***spiritism.*** This is calling up the spirits of the dead.

Some manifestations are spirit-rapping, table-lifting, slate-writing, apparitions, communications through mediums in a state of trance. Most of the spiritist seances are fraudulent, but sometimes the devil manifests himself. God can permit the souls of the dead to return to earth. But there is no indication that He permits Himself to obey mediums. The devil may sometimes impersonate the spirits of the dead. Satan is old and skillful in deceit, and can assume the appearance of an angel of light.

Do all temptations come from the bad angels?—Some temptations come from the bad angels; but other temptations come from ourselves and from the persons and things about us.

1. This is what we mean when we say that temptations come to us from the *flesh,* the *world,* and the *devil.*

The evil inclinations of our weak and corrupted nature tempt us to sin. The world, with its sinful wants and vanities, tempts us to sin. The devil goes about continually tempting us, making use of both our nature and the world for his evil purposes.

2. In itself, temptation is *not a sin.* It becomes sinful *only* when: (a) we bring it upon ourselves by carelessness or over-confidence; (b) we play with, take pleasure in, or yield to it.

The greatest saints have often been most strongly tempted. Our Lord even permitted Himself to be tempted. Thus we see that temptation is not a sin, because we are not responsible for it.

3. God permits us to be tempted in order *to try us,* to let us win an eternal reward.

God subjected the angels to a test. Those who passed it are now enjoying Him in heaven, their reward. "Because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee" (Tob. 12:13).

God permitted the devil to tempt our first parents. Temptations serve to keep us humble. God permits all mankind to have temptations, but never temptation beyond their strength to resist. "God is faithful and will not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength" (Cor. 10:13).

4. The stronger the temptation, the greater the *graces* God gives for its conquest.

The conquest by the saints of wicked temptations have made them greater saints. Christ Himself was tempted by the devil, to gluttony, to avarice, and to pride. He wanted to show us that by resisting we may rise to greater love of God. Good men who are worried because so many temptations assail them should remember that ants quickly gather over a jar of honey; the devil strives to catch the good, because he is already sure of the wicked.

Can we always resist temptations?—We can always resist temptations, because no temptation can force us into sin, and God will always help us if we ask Him.

The *length of time* during which a temptation persists does not make it sinful, if we continue *resisting* it. A temptation may attack us all our lives, but as long as we fight it, or pay no attention to it, as long as we do not yield, we commit no sin. We have not been conquered, and God will reward us for the good fight.

1. No temptation can do us *harm* if we obey God's laws and keep away from sin. If we resist, temptation will flee from us.

Our lot for all eternity depends entirely on ourselves. God votes for heaven; the devil votes for hell. The *deciding vote* is ours. Shall we vote for heaven or for hell? "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

2. When assailed by temptation, one must at once *resist.* It is easier to conquer temptation at the beginning than later on, just as a fire is easier to put out at the outset.

Since nothing can be done without divine grace, one must pray. One must imitate the Apostles who had recourse to Jesus when a storm arose. Let him say at once, "Lord, make haste to help me!"

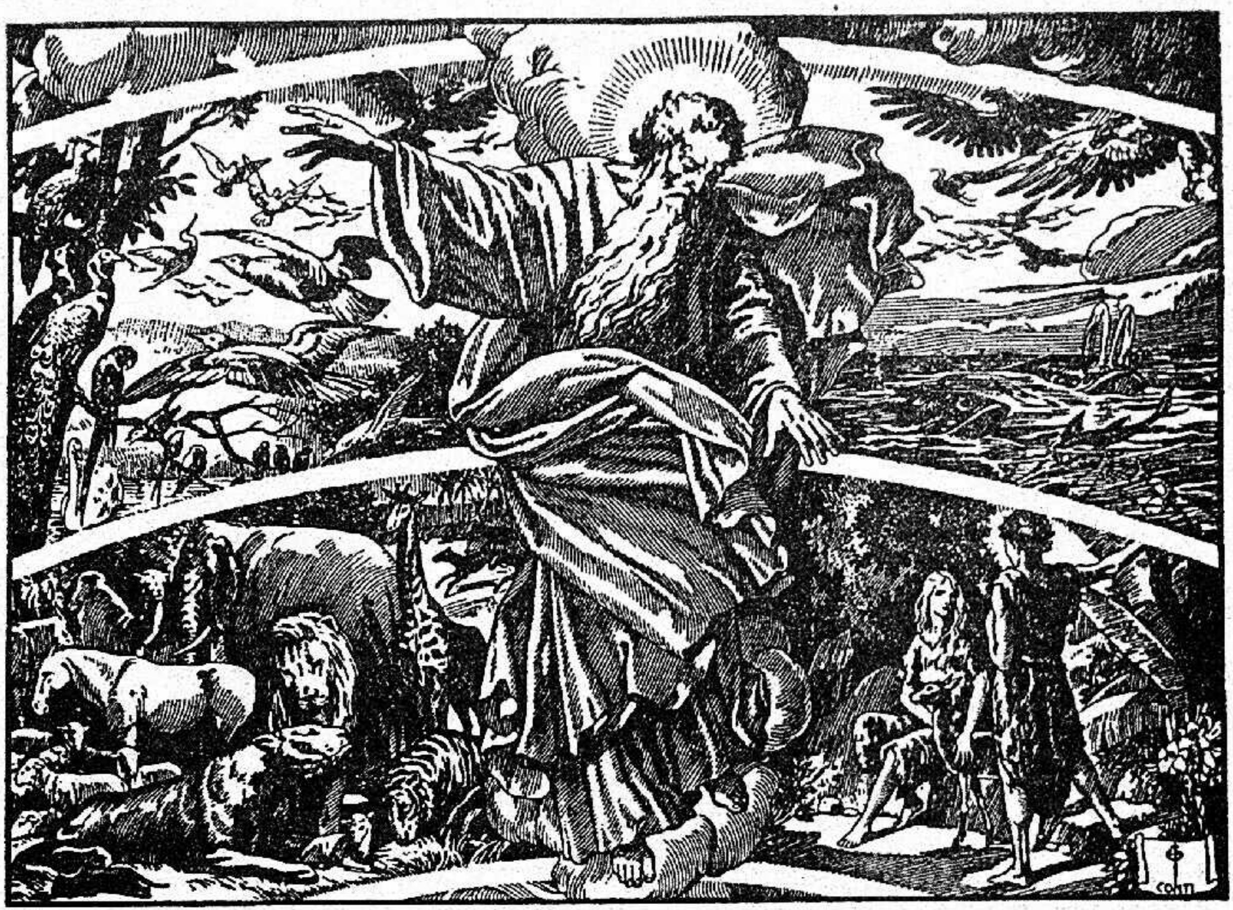
3. Some *remedies* against temptation are:

(a) Watchfulness and prayer.

"Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). Avoid idleness, keeping always occupied, either by work, or by wholesome recreation. If evil thoughts enter the mind, think of other things, in this way ignoring the temptation.

(b) Frequent confession and Holy Communion.

(c) Devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the Guardian Angels.



The Book of Genesis describes the creation of the first man and the first woman in these words: "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Then the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon Adam: and when he was fast asleep, he took one of his ribs. . . . And the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman" (Gen. 2:7, 21, 22). Such was the creation of Adam and Eve, our first parents. God gave them power over all created things: the earth, the beasts, birds, fishes, plants, and all things else.

17. An Image of God

What is man?—Man is a creature composed of body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God.

Before the creation of man, God said, "Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

1. God formed the body of man from the slime of the earth; but He *breathed the soul* into man's body. In this way the soul came direct from God, and indicates closer likeness to Him.

We should always reverence our likeness to God, trying to perfect it by making our soul as holy as possible. Once the enemies of a king tried to make his son do something wrong. But the youth proudly and resolutely answered, "No! I am the son of the king!" By Baptism man becomes the adopted son of God, Who is infinitely higher than any earthly king. His soul is like his Father in Heaven.

2. The soul of man is different from the soul of brute animals. Animals have senses and *instinct,* but neither reason nor free will. *Free will* is that power of the soul to choose whether to act or not to act.

If a horse has not eaten for a day, and you put some hay before him, he will eat, because his instinct moves him to do so. But a hungry man may fast for days, and still refuse to eat however hungry he may be, if he *wills* not to eat. ***The difference between man's free will and animal instinct is that a man can say "No" to himself.***

3. The soul and the body are not loosely connected parts of man; they are *united* in a substantial union. The soul is not located in any particular member of the body, but is whole and entire in each part

Is this likeness to God in the body or in the soul?—This likeness to God is chiefly in the soul.

Man continues in this likeness to God only when he remains in God's grace, for then he is a "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).

1. Like God, man's soul is *an immortal spirit,* with understanding and free will. Some deny the existence of the soul, because it cannot be seen; yet the same people would not deny the existence of human reason, even if this cannot be seen, either.

Some claim that man has two souls, one good and one evil, striving for mastery. But the struggle that we often experience comes from only one soul with different tendencies arising from the fact of our being made of both body and soul, partly material and partly spiritual. In a living person, the soul should not be considered apart from the body; their union is as close as the relation between a musician and his instrument at the hour of a concert.

2. Through his two faculties of the soul, understanding and free will, man obtains *dominion* over the material world, as God possesses power over the entire universe.

As God said before creating man: "Let him have dominion over the beasts and the whole earth" (Gen. 1:26). Through his likeness to God, man has the power to know the true, the good, the beautiful, so far even as to know the Source of all truth, goodness, and beauty, God Himself.

How can we prove that the soul of man is immortal?—We can prove that the soul of man is immortal, because man's acts of intelligence are spiritual; therefore, his soul must be a spiritual being, not dependent on matter, and hence not subject to decay or death.

If even matter cannot totally disappear, however small the particle, how can the soul of man, of a far higher order, be thought to suffer extinction?

1. Man has *mind and will.* He can reflect, reason, plan for the future, make judgments, remember. These prove his soul spiritual. Such a soul cannot die as the body does.

Man longs for an ideal state of perfect happiness, such happiness as is impossible to attain on earth. This universal longing must have been placed in men's souls by God Himself; it is a desire for the infinite happiness of a union with the Creator. If, therefore, man's soul were not immortal, he would have no chance to realize his dream of bliss, and God would be cruel in implanting the longing for it in his breast.

2. There have been many instances of the dead *appearing* to the living. In the Gospel, Moses and Elias appeared on Mount Thabor to Christ and three of His Apostles. At Christ's death, many who were dead rose and appeared in Jerusalem.

The Blessed Virgin has through the centuries continued to appear to men; such instances are almost innumerable. Saints have also returned to earth to comfort or instruct the living; even souls in purgatory have returned, to beg for prayers. We must, however, be very careful about believing in particular instances of appearances by the dead; the devil can and often does use this instrumentality to trick the gullible.

3. *Belief* in the immortality of the soul and a life after death is universal among mankind, including the most primitive peoples.

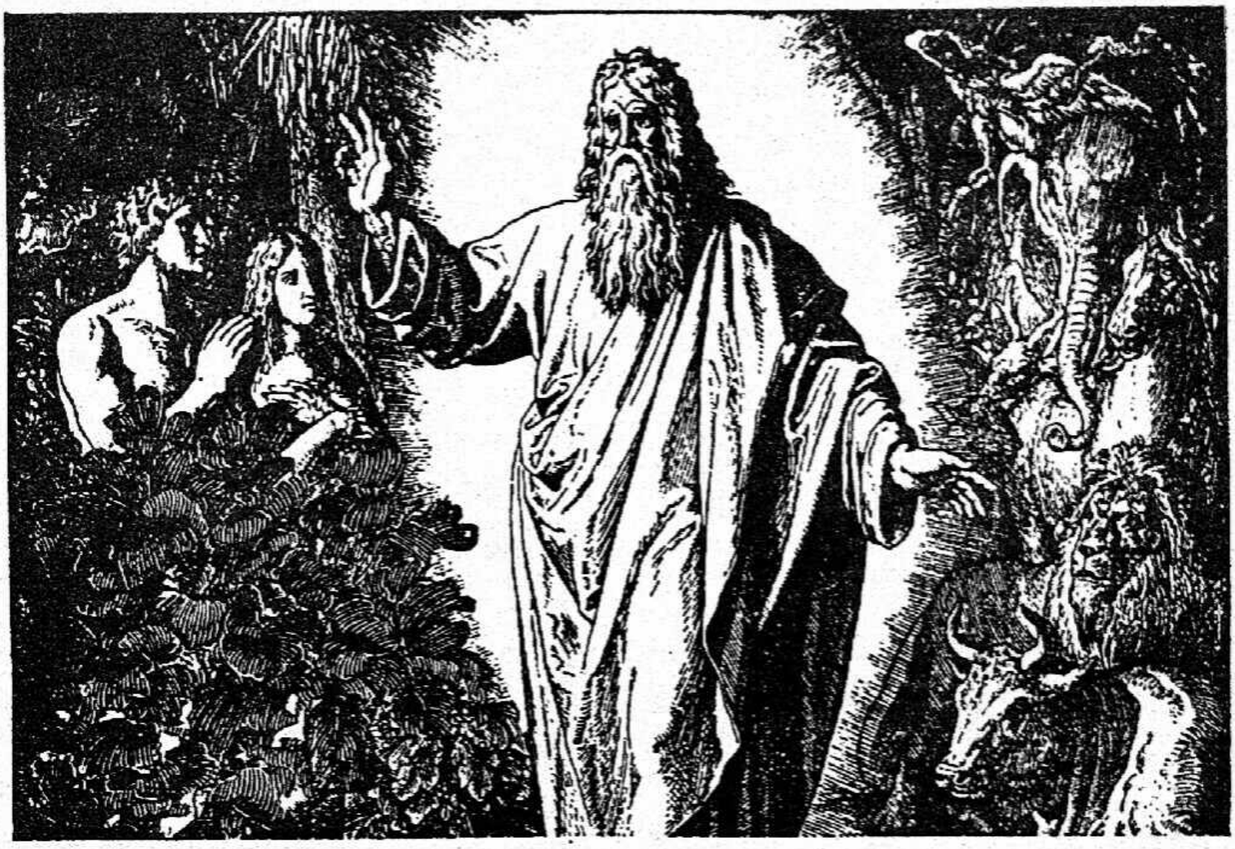
In the Bible are many instances of the belief of the Jews in another life, where the souls of the dead would be. For instance, one of their laws forbade holding intercourse with the dead. The Greeks and Romans believed in Tartarus and Elysium, places for the dead. Other nations have different cults to the dead, especially during their burial ceremonies. Such cults would be meaningless did those who took part in them not have an idea of another life for departed souls.

4. If the soul were not immortal, the wicked who commit evil all their lives would go unpunished. The just who suffer continually on earth would not receive any reward. This would be *injustice* impossible to the perfect justice of God.

If even man, imperfect as he is, can see innumerable examples of injustice in life, could not God? Would He not have a way of correcting such injustice? And if so, since it cannot be corrected in this life, there must be another, where immortal souls go to obtain perfect justice.

5. Holy Scripture, the Word of God, teaches that the soul is immortal.

"And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, to see it always" (Dan. 12:2) Our Lord Himself said to the good thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matt. 10:28). "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32).



Our first parents were perfectly happy in Paradise. If they had not sinned, they would never have died or suffered from sickness and sorrow. When the time came for their leaving the earth, they would have been taken body and soul to Heaven.

The tree of life grew in Paradise. By eating of its fruit Adam and Eve were preserved from death, sickness, and all manner of weakness of the body. All these gifts were lost as a punishment of the sin our first parents committed.

18. Adam and Eve: Our First Parents

Who were the first man and woman?—The first man and woman were Adam and Eve, the first parents of the whole human race.

1. God made Adam's body out of the slime of the earth, and breathed an immortal soul into it (Gen. 2:7). God then cast a deep sleep upon Adam, and taking one of his ribs formed it into Eve (Gen. 2:22).

Adam's body was formed from the earth. But his *soul* was immediately created *out of nothing* by the almighty power of God. The soul of every person is created in this way. We do not inherit our soul from our parents; it comes *directly* from the hand of God at the same moment that we receive life.

2. Adam and Eve were our *first parents.* All of mankind makes up one great family.

Sacred Scripture says that before the creation of Adam "there was not a man to till the earth" (Gen. 2:5); and that Eve was the "mother of all the living" (Gen. 3:20). Legends of all races tell of an *original happiness* from which man fell, and of a flood that covered the earth.

(a) All men have common bodily characteristics.

The beat of the pulse, the temperature of the body, the physical structure, and even such faculties as the sense of smell, of sight, of hearing,—all these vary little among different races. Differences are results of variations in climate, food, ways of living, and opportunity.

(b) Emotionally and intellectually all races are the same.

Researches have discovered a universal sameness in ideas of right and wrong; there is a universal moral code, even among the most primitive of tribes. For example, all men consider wrong the murder of those who are not enemies, cruelty to children, incest, and irreverence. If the moral code were the result of fear of reprisal, why was not stealing considered wrong when committed against an enemy? Science almost compels the conviction of the origin of mankind from only one pair of ancestors; Religion declares it.

What was the chief gift bestowed on Adam and Eve by God?—The chief gift bestowed on Adam and Eve by God was sanctifying grace, which made them children of God and gave them the right to heaven.

1. God created Adam and Eve in the state of innocence and holiness. This made them pleasing to God, and full of love for Him. It made them children of God, and therefore heirs of heaven. This state of innocence we term *"sanctifying grace"*.

"God filled them with wisdom and the knowledge of understanding. . . . He created in them the science of the spirit, he filled their heart with wisdom. . . . And their eye saw the majesty of his glory, and their ears heard his glorious voice" (Ecclus. 17:6, 11).

2. God's abiding grace made Adam and Eve so happy that their happiness almost equalled that of the angels.

"Thou hast made him a little less than the angels: thou hast crowned him with glory and honor" (Ps. 8:6).

What other gifts were bestowed on Adam and Eve by God?—The other gifts bestowed on Adam and Eve by God were happiness in the Garden of Paradise, great knowledge, control of the passions by reason, and freedom from suffering and death.

If our first parents had not sinned these gifts would have been transmitted to all men as the possession of human nature.

1. God put Adam and Eve in the "paradise of pleasure", a garden which contained all kinds of plants, flowers, birds, and beasts, — everything good that could be imagined.

All the birds and beasts were perfectly obedient to Adam and Eve. In the midst of the garden grew the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Near it was the tree of life, which protected Adam and Eve from disease.

2. God also gave Adam and Eve *infused knowledge;* that is, without experience or study they knew all that full-grown persons needed to fulfill the purpose of their creation, and as educators of men.

For example, Adam knew the indissolubility of marriage; his insight helped him give suitable names to the animals.

3. God blessed Adam and Eve with a freedom from subjection to their lower appetites, such as impurity, drunkenness, etc. They had no *inclination* to evil.

Their will was free from all weakness, weakened by no sensual desires. On account of the absence of rebellion of the flesh against the spirit, they felt no shame even though they were naked in Paradise.

4. Lastly, God gave Adam and Eve freedom from bodily disease and death.

Adam and Eve were created *immortal,* and were made free from all subjection to sickness, which is the prelude to death. Had Adam and Eve been faithful to God, they would never have died, nor suffered disease.

What commandment did God give Adam and Eve?—God gave Adam and Eve the commandment not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree that grew in the Garden of Paradise.

1. God wanted Adam as head and representative of the human race to *merit* heaven. And so, after granting him His abiding grace, and blessing him with wonderful gifts, and giving him the Garden of Paradise to live in, He commanded him not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree.

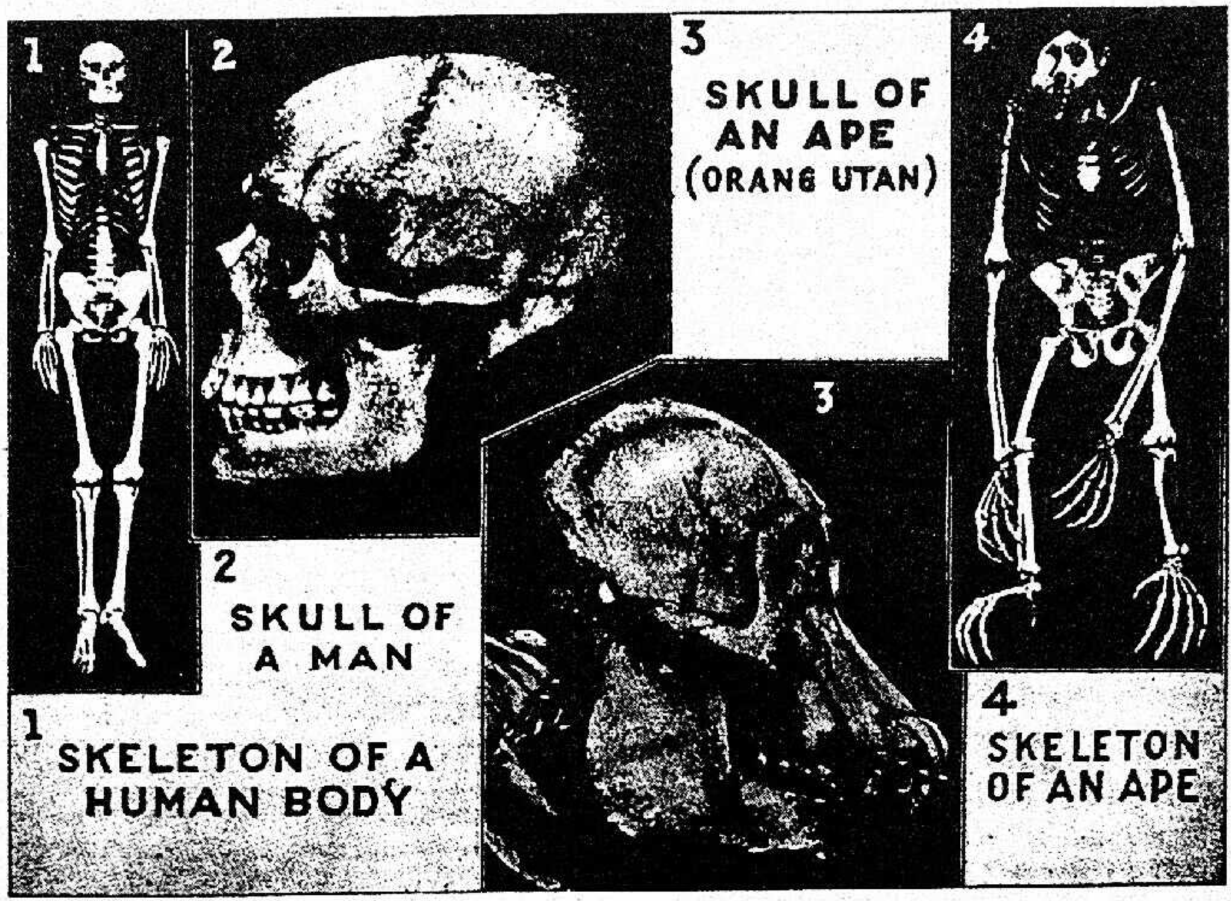
"Of every tree of Paradise thou shalt eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death" (Gen. 2:16, 17). The fruit of the forbidden tree was not evil in itself, for in Paradise God did not place anything bad. It was bad only because it was forbidden; and if Adam and Eve partook of it they would have disobeyed God.

2. If Adam and Eve had been faithful to God, they would have passed without disease and without bodily death from their earthly Paradise to heaven, God's home, where they would see Him face to face.

All the children of Adam, the entire human race, would have been born as Adam had been created, in a state of friendship with God, and with all his gifts. If one had sinned, he would have been punished by God, but not being the head of the entire human race, he would not have passed on the stain to his descendants. Everybody would then have suffered for his own sins alone.

Did Adam and Eve obey the commandment of God?—Adam and Eve did not obey the commandment of God, but ate of the forbidden fruit.

The devil tempted Eve to eat of the fruit, and she ate; then she gave some to Adam, and he also ate (Gen. 3:1-13).



Although there are some points of similarity between the skeletons of man and the ape, the differences are numerous and fundamental. As one scientist remarked, evolutionists might as well claim that man descended from any other form of life, because differences between man and the ape are as important as between man and other forms.

The ape has neither chin nor forehead. Its foot grasps like a hand. Its teeth are not arranged in close rows. If it were forced to stand erect, it would be looking upwards, not forward. The average weight of its brain compared to that of its body is as 1 to 70. For man the ratio is 1 to 35. The ape cannot speak articulately.

19. Evolution and the Bible

How did the body of the first man originate?—According to the Bible, the body of the first man was made by God from the slime of the earth.

"And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth" (Gen. 2:7).

1. The *natural and obvious meaning* of these words from the Book of Genesis is that the body of Adam was made directly by God from *created* substance. Such is the traditional Catholic interpretation.

The Church teaches that the Genesis account is substantially historically true. But Catholics are not forbidden certain liberty of interpretation. For example, the "day" of creation is not necessarily—and not probably—our 24-hour day. We may consider the work done by God in one "day" as an immediate act, or as the result of a long period of development through the functioning of natural forces.

2. Holy Scripture was not written for the purpose of serving as a *technical reference work* in science. The sacred writer's aim was to tell the story of creation, for the belief of the people, not for scientific investigation.

What is the theory of evolution?—Evolution is a theory concerning the origin and development of plants, animals, and man.

1. The theory holds that life *began with the simplest forms,* then developed into

more complex forms, until at last the most complex form, man, was "evolved".

Some evolutionists hold that the monkey or ape and man both *developed from a common ancestor.* Darwin's first man was a highly-developed ape. "Man when he was in honor did not understand: he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them" (Ps. 48:21).

2. Many speak as if the theory of evolution had been thoroughly and scientifically *proved.* This is not so; at present conjectures still largely underlie the theory. *Natural science* alone can never explain how the first human body was actually produced.

Unaided, it cannot explain the origin of inorganic matter, or the origin of life in the simplest organism. Divine Revelation alone can give the answer to the origin of man, and of all created things.

3. The evolutionists based their theories on the discovery of the so-called "missing link," from which the first man is supposed to have developed, a link between man and the ape. *There is no such "missing link".* All skeletons discovered have been proved to be either of genuine men or of real apes.

Of the distinguished modern scientists who deny that evolution is an established fact, we might mention: Fabre, the outstanding naturalist of modern times; Millikan, the great physicist; John Burroughs, the naturalist; Professors Richet (Paris), and Henderson (Harvard): Dr. Dwight, the anatomist; Alexis Carrel, and Sir Bertram Windle.

4. However, even if the theory of evolution *could* be scientifically proved, even if a "missing link" *should* be discovered, the theory would not be opposed to Catholic doctrine, which merely requires belief in the immediate creation of Adam's soul, in the image of God. Any "evolution" was surely begun by an Intelligent Cause: God.

We therefore take literally the Book of Genesis, which tells of the peculiar creation of man, of the formation of the first woman from the first man, of the original happiness of our First Parents in the state of justice, of their integrity and immortality, of the test to which God put them, of their transgression of the divine command at the instigation of the devil in some form, of the loss of the original innocence, and of the promise of the Redeemer.

What is the origin of the human soul?—God directly creates every human soul out of nothing.

1. From the very beginning, God has created every human soul out of nothing.

Thus He created the soul of Adam, when after forming his body, He "breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Every human soul is created at the same moment that one comes to life, at conception.

2. Man's soul is *not produced from some other soul or matter.* It is spiritual and simple. It did not exist before the person lived. It did not come to exist after he was already alive. Man's life is due to his soul. As soon as the soul leaves the body, life ceases.

The investigations of scientists have discovered a singular universality and sameness in ideas of right and wrong, a moral code, in all races and peoples, however primitive. These are universally looked upon as wrong: the wanton murder of one not an enemy, stealing from one's own group, maltreatment of children, irreverence, incest, adultery. If this attitude resulted from fear of reprisal, why is not murder considered wrong when against an enemy? Why has incest always been regarded as wrong, when primitive men surely could have no idea of the evils of inbreeding? One must conclude that this universal *conscience* comes from One Source.

3. Man's soul is *not derived* from his parents. Only his body is derived from them. There is no possible "evolution" of the soul, for it is a spiritual substance, not subject to the laws of physical nature, and could not possibly be developed from a lower or material form of life.

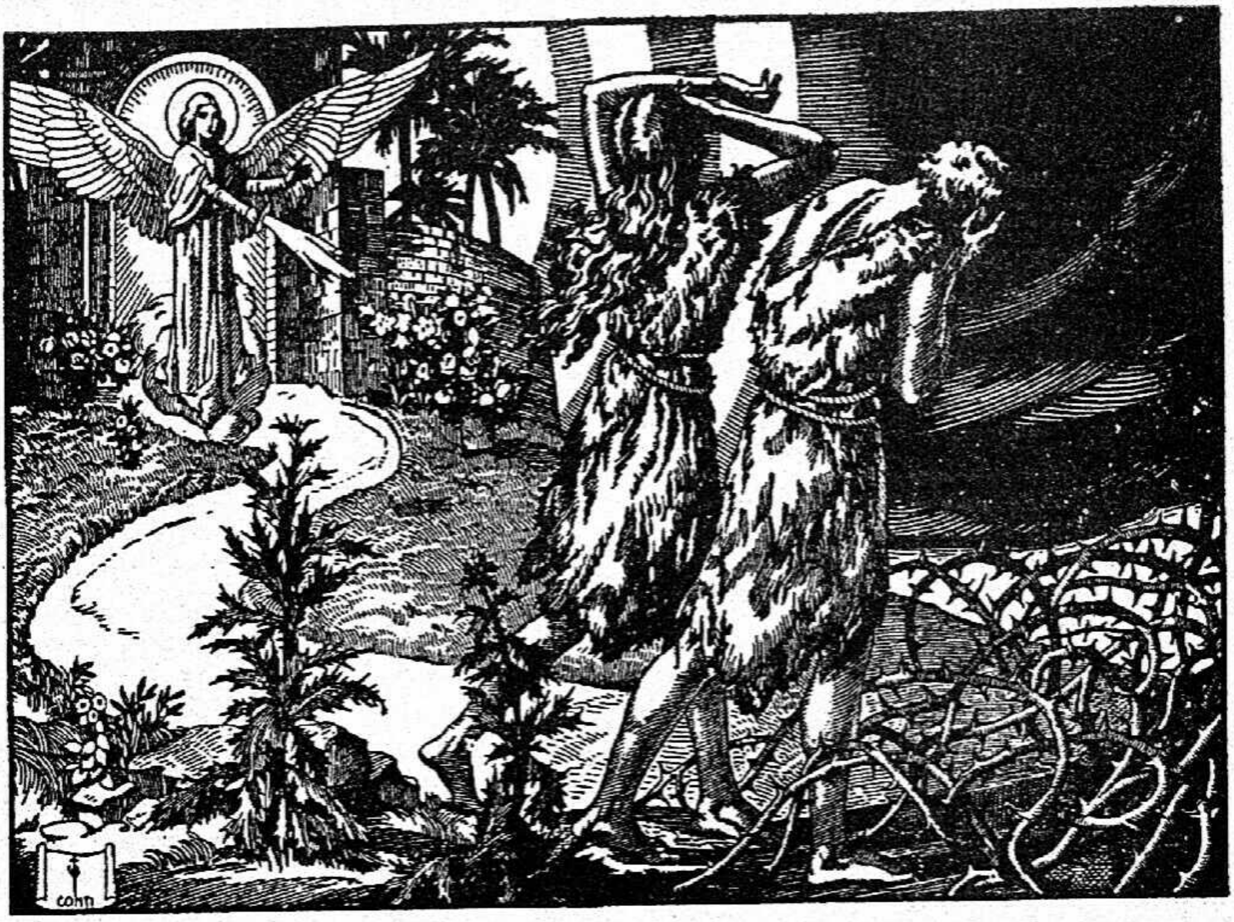
Manifestations of the soul, like cleverness, talent, traits of character, etc., by which children resemble their parents, are due to the *attributes of the body* that they derived from their parents, or to training in the family. If one holds a colored glass to the light the reflection will have the color of the glass. But the glass did not make the sun whose reflection is cast. Is even the mind a product of evolution? The most primitive man is capable of abstract reasoning. The most intelligent beasts cannot think in *concepts.*

How many centuries were there from Adam to Christ?—The Church has never given a decision; this question will perhaps never be answered.

1. It is generally admitted that *the Bible teaches nothing definite* on the matter. The line of patriarchs, which it gives, with their ages, probably contains many gaps.

A man is said to be a son of another, whereas he may only be a remote descendant. In the same way the Bible speaks of Our Lord as the Son of David, although David preceded Him 1000 years.

2. Some Catholic theologians state that the age of man may be stretched to *ten, or one hundred thousand years* or even longer. Neither scientists nor theologians have come to a definite solution.



God punished Adam and Eve for the sin they committed. "And the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure, to till the earth from which he was taken" (Gen. 3:23).

All the calamities in the world today, war, disease, poverty, etc., are consequences of Adam's sin. We inherited all the weaknesses that were part of his punishment.

20. Original Sin

What happened to Adam and Eve on account of their sin?—On account of their sin Adam and Eve lost sanctifying grace, the right to heaven, and their special gifts; they became subject to death, to suffering, and to a strong inclination to evil, and were driven from the Garden of Paradise.

1. Adam and Eve immediately lost God's abiding grace and friendship, their holiness and innocence: they lost *sanctifying grace.*

This was the worst punishment. Having lost sanctifying grace, they lost the right to heaven, to see God..

2. They lost their *special gifts:* they became subject to suffering and death.

Their minds and wills were so weakened that they became inclined to evil, subjected to *temptation.* "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3:16-19).

3. God *expelled* Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise.

"And the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure" (Gen. 3:23, 24).

4. Some wonder how the eating of one fruit could have been so grievous a crime. We must remember that God gave Adam and Eve every blessing. He only required them, as *proof* of their faithfulness,.. to abstain from eating the fruit of one tree.

Doubtless Paradise was filled with trees having more delicious fruit than the forbidden tree. Pride and disobedience and ingratitude caused them to sin. They defied God, and despised His threats. *They wanted to be as powerful and great as God.*

What has happened to us on account of the sin of Adam?—On account of the sin of Adam, we, his descendants, come into the world deprived of sanctifying grace and inherit his punishment, as we would have inherited his gifts had he been obedient to God.

"Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world and through sin death, and thus death has passed into all men" (Rom. 5:12).

1. This sin in us is called ***original sin.*** It is the state in which every descendant of Adam comes into the world, totally deprived of grace, through inheriting the punishment, not of Adam's personal sin, but of his sin as head of the human race. This sin is called original because it comes down to us through our origin, from Adam.

Thus all men are *born in sin,* that is, they are born without the friendship of God, and with no right to heaven. Original sin does not come to us from Eve, but from Adam alone, since God made him representative and head of the whole human race. Eve was punished for her disobedience, as Adam was, but did not pass on her guilt to all mankind. Our original sin comes from our first father.

2. Because of original sin, *heaven was closed* to all men until the death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord instituted the sacrament of Baptism in order to restore to us the right to heaven that Adam had lost.

A person after baptism is in the state of grace and free from sin. If he dies immediately after baptism, even if he had committed sins, he goes *straight to heaven.* His sins and their punishment are all forgiven him.

What are the chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin? — The chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin are: death, suffering, ignorance, and a strong inclination to sin.

1. By original sin we became *subject to disease* and death. This was part of the punishment God laid on Adam.

"In what day soever you shall eat of it, you shall die the death" (Gen. 2:17).

2. Our whole nature became inclined to evil. Our reason is in perpetual conflict with our passions.

Even after our souls are cleansed of original sin by baptism, the corruption of our nature and other punishments, such as sickness, evil inclinations, etc., remain. "The imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil" (Gen. 8:21). "The flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17).

Is God unjust in punishing us on account of the sin of Adam?—God is not unjust in punishing us on account of the sin of Adam, because original sin does not take away from us anything to which we have a strict right as human beings, but only the free gifts which God in His goodness would have bestowed on us if Adam had not sinned.

1. All mankind must suffer for the sin of Adam because he was the *head* and representative of the whole human family.

In much the same way, the ruler of a country represents the whole people. He declares war or makes peace, and the people are affected by his acts. When Alfonso XIII of Spain was dethroned, his children lost their right to the throne through no fault of their own. So also the children of a rich man who goes bankrupt lose all the inheritance they hoped for, through no fault of theirs.

2. We should have shared in Adam's *blessings* of soul and body without any merit of our own, if he had not sinned. In the same way we share in his guilt.

If Adam had not sinned, we would have been born in the state of holiness and grace that had been his. Each man, however, would have been free to commit actual sin, and to be cast into hell. However, not being the head of the human race, he would not have transmitted his sin to all mankind.

Was any human person ever preserved from original sin? — The Blessed Virgin Mary was preserved from original sin in view of the merits of her Divine Son, and this privilege is called her Immaculate Conception.

"And when the angel had come to her, he said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women'" (Luke 1:28).

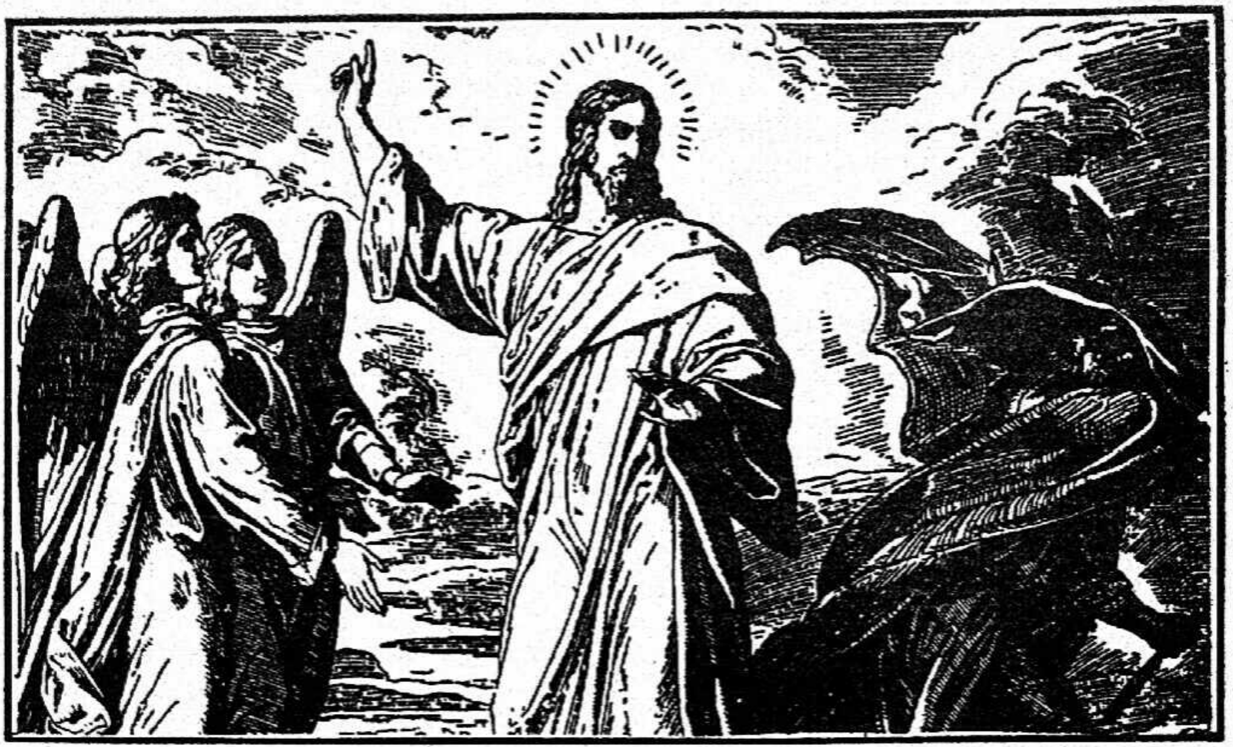
1. From the very first moment of her conception the *Blessed Virgin* was preserved from all stain of original sin. She was *conceived and born* without original sin.

God, having ordained that Mary was to be the Mother of His Son, could not permit her soul to lack for a single instant all those graces that would make her most pleasing to Him.

2. Our Blessed Mother's soul was created as *pure* and spotless as the soul of Eve. Where Eve committed sin and lost her spotlessness, our Mother Mary kept herself pure and spotless to the end of her life.

We commemorate the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 8.

3. *St. John the Baptist* was cleansed from original sin while he was still in the womb of his mother. He was born free from sin, but he was, like us, conceived in sin.



Christ permitted Himself to be tempted by the devil. After Our Lord's forty days' fast in the desert, the devil appeared to Him and tempted Him to gluttony, to pride, and to avarice. But Our Lord resisted the devil and sent him away. Then angels came to minister to Him. God wishes to show us that temptation, far from being a sin in itself, is a source of merit if we resist firmly. Then God will send us His blessings and consolations, and we shall be dearer to Him after our successful fight against temptation.

21. Actual Sin

What is actual sin?—Actual sin is any wilful thought, desire, word, action, or omission forbidden by the law of God.

1. There are two general classes of sins: original and actual. Original sin is the kind of sin that we ***inherit*** from Adam. Actual sin is the kind of sin that *we ourselves **commit.*** In general, when we speak of "sin" we mean actual sin.

Sin is an offense against God, a *violation* of His commandments. To sin is to despise God, to disobey Him, to offend Him. One who sins takes the gifts that God has given, and uses them to insult Him.

2. No person exists who does not sin, however holy he may be. The only human being who was created *without sin,* and never committed sin, was the ***Blessed Virgin;*** this was a special privilege bestowed on her because she was to be the Mother of our Saviour.

St. John says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

In what way do we fall into sin?—We fall step by step from temptation into sin.

The different *steps* at times follow each other rapidly and are accomplished in the twinkling of an eye.

1. Sin is not committed without temptation. First an evil *thought* comes into the mind. This in itself is not sinful; it is only a temptation.

A man may be in a jewelry store looking at some jewels. The salesman turns away to talk to someone else, leaving a precious diamond ring on the counter. The thought enters the man's mind that it would be easy for him to take the ring and walk away unnoticed. This is temptation, not sin.

2. If we do not immediately reject the thought, it awakens in the mind an *affection or liking* for it.

If the man in the above example does not resist and reject the thought, but plays with it, and becomes pleased with the idea, he thereby gives partial consent, and commits a slight sin.

3. Next the thought is followed by an evil *desire* in which we take pleasure.

If, still playing with the thought, the man wishes that he could take the diamond ring without being noticed, the consent is complete, and he commits a sin in his heart (interiorly).

4. The *resolution* to commit the sin when occasion presents itself follows. Then the exterior *act* is committed.

Finally, the man glances to see if the salesman is still busy. Then he takes the ring and walks away with it. Thus the wish or desire has been translated into an exterior act. Even should the man be prevented from stealing, he is guilty of grave sin.

Why is an exterior sin more evil than an interior sin?—An exterior sin is more evil than an interior sin, because it is attended by worse consequences.

1. An exterior sin often causes *scandal,* and is more severely punished by God here on earth as well as after death.

Drunkenness reduces the drunkard and his family to poverty and sickness. Impurity destroys the body, sometimes producing insanity. Murder often leads the culprit to the electric chair.

2. And worse, an exterior sin increases the malice of the will, and destroys the sense of shame. The repetition of exterior sins forms the *habit* of sinning, and vice is formed. The conscience goes to sleep, and the sinner becomes so hardened that he no longer sees the evil and wickedness of his sin.

Thus it becomes easier and easier for him to commit sins of a worse kind. His state becomes worse and worse until finally he becomes a *hardened sinner* who believes himself sinless.

Are all evil acts sinful?—Not all evil acts are sinful; there may be times when such acts are not sinful, as:

1. When we *do not know* that the act is sinful.

Noe became intoxicated, but committed no sin, because he was not aware of the strength of the wine. So one might by mistake take poison instead of medicine and die, but he would not be guilty of suicide.

2. When the act is done through *no fault* of our own.

If one is not aware that a certain day is a day of abstinence, and eats meat, he commits no sin. Again, one might by pure accident and through no negligence on his part drop a loaded revolver. Even if it explodes and kills a person, he is not guilty of murder.

3. When we *do not consent* to the evil.

A stronger man may take our hand, and in spite of our refusal and protest force it to drop a lighted match into a gasoline tank. Even if there is an explosion and a whole town is set on fire, we are not guilty of arson. In the same way, as long as one does not consent to an evil thought, it remains a temptation, and he commits no sin.

When are we guilty of sins which we ourselves do not commit?—We are guilty of sins which we ourselves do not commit when we cooperate with another person's sins.

1. We share in another's sin: (a) by counsel; (b) by command; (c) by consent; (d) by provocation; (e) by praise or flattery; (f) by silence; (g) by assistance; (h) by defense or concealment; and (i) by not punishing the evil done.

Thus rulers, legislative leaders, parents, employers, teachers, superiors, owners of shows and theatres, editors, publishers, and others in a position of responsibility, may easily render themselves guilty of the sins of others. One who is to blame for another's sin is *as guilty* as if he had committed the sin himself.

2. One who tempts or provokes another into sin is perhaps *the more guilty* of the two.

Our Lord says: "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it were better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matt. 18:6).

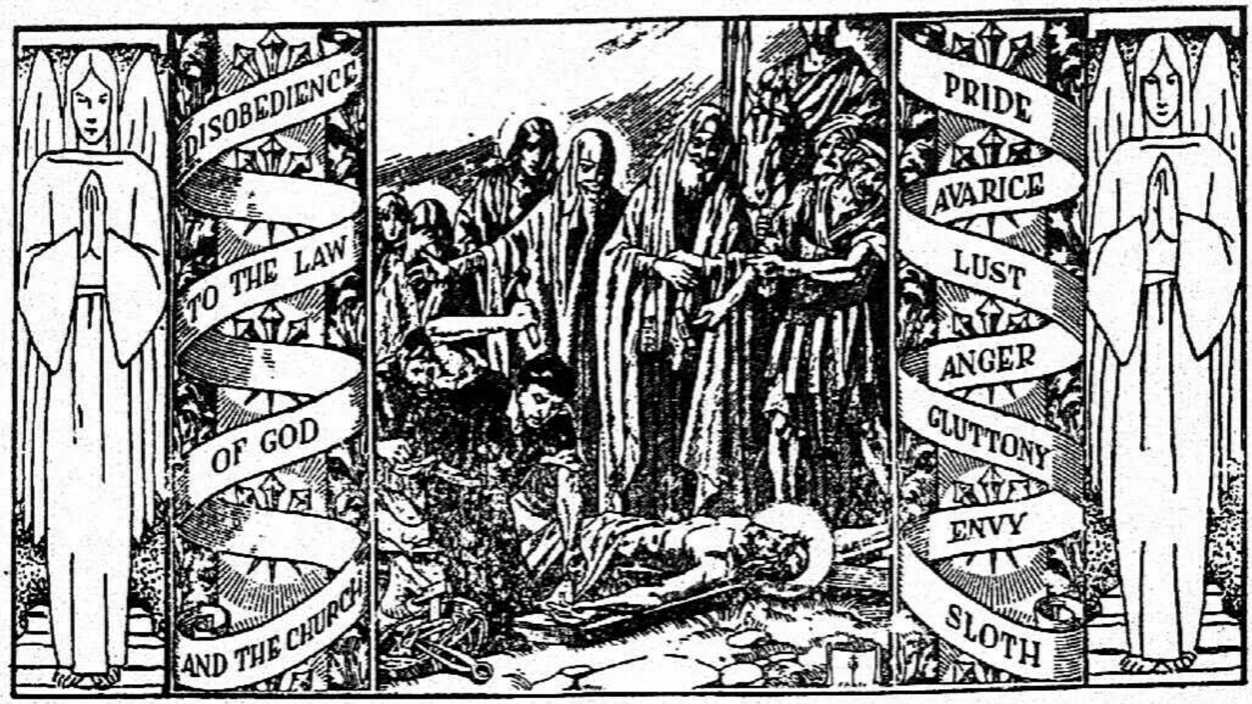
How many kinds of actual sin are there?—There are two kinds of actual sin: mortal sin and venial sin.

1. Another classification is: (a) sins of thought; (b) sins of desire; (c) sins of word; (d) sins of deed; (e) sins of omission.

If we take pleasure in thinking proudly of ourselves, we sin by *thought*. If we cannot rest content because we envy somebody's clothes and wish we had them, we sin by *desire*. If we get angry and say angry words to someone, we sin by *word*. If we are so angry that we begin striking the person, we sin by *deed*. If we do not do what is our duty, such as going to Mass on Sunday, we sin by *omission*.

2. Sins are also classified into (a) our own sins; and (b) sins in which we cooperate and for which we are responsible.

We must not be presumptous and over-confident. We must remember that when we do not sin, it is only through the grace of God. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). *A humble distrust* of ourselves is a preservative against sin.



Mortal sin is the greatest evil in the world. It separates us from God. Because of our mortal sins, Jesus Christ suffered agonies and died on the cross.

To strengthen our resolution not to commit sin, we should remember also that even a single mortal sin is enough to send us to hell.

22. Mortal Sin

What is mortal sin? – Mortal sin is a grievous offense against the law of God.

1. Any wilful thought, word, action or omission, in serious *violation* of God's law, is a mortal sin. Examples of mortal sin are blasphemy, wilful murder, adultery, arson, robbery, etc. Mortal sin occurs as soon as God is no longer our final end in our thoughts, words, and actions.

Each mortal sin we commit is a three-fold insult to Almighty God: it insults Him by rebellion or disobedience, by ingratitude, and by contempt.

2. Circumstances of person, cause, time, place, means, object, and evil consequences *enhance* or *decrease* the guilt of the sin.

Thus mortal sins, although all mortal, differ in the weight of their guilt.

Why is this sin called mortal?–This sin is called mortal, or deadly, because it deprives the sinner of sanctifying grace, the supernatural life of the soul.

1. Without sanctifying grace, the soul is displeasing to God, *unclean,* and can never behold Him or be with Him in heaven.

Without sanctifying grace, the soul is without God; and without God, the devil makes the soul his habitation. "Know thou and see that it is an evil and bitter thing for thee to have left the Lord thy God" (Jer. 2:19).

2. The sinner loses charity towards God and his fellow-men, and by the *weakening* of his will and the darkening of his intellect, is liable to fall into other mortal sins.

The devil cries to his subordinates, "God hath forsaken him; pursue him and take him, for there is none to deliver him" (Ps. 70:11).

3. Without sanctifying grace, the soul is truly *"dead";* and if an adult dies in that state, he will suffer the torments of the damned.

The word "mortal" comes from the Latin *mors,* which means *death.* St. John Chrysostom said, "Sinners are dead while they live, and the just live after they are dead."

Besides depriving the sinner of sanctifying grace, what else does mortal sin do to the soul?–Besides depriving the sinner of sanctifying grace, mortal sin makes the soul an enemy of God, takes away the merit of all its good actions, deprives it of the right to everlasting happiness in heaven, and makes it deserving of everlasting punishment in hell.

1. Man was made *for God,* and what an awful calamity it would be to become His enemy! It would be as if the food which was made to support and sustain man should all of a sudden turn to poison him instead.

Through mortal sin, the sinner becomes a stranger to divine love, and to the love of neighbor; his heart turns cold because he has put out the flame of charity by grave sin. His reason, a gift of God, is obscured, and he fails to perceive the things of God. Thus a sinner the more he sins, becomes more insensitive to evil; his will is finally so weakened that all conscience is lost, and he falls into greater and greater sins more and more easily.

"Adulterers, do you not know that the friendship of this world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of this world becomes an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4).

2. During all the time that the sinner remains in mortal sin, all his good works do not help him to heaven: he earns *no merits* until he gives up his state of mortal sin.

As the Apostle says, "If I give my body to be burned and have not charity, I am nothing." One who falls into mortal sin may be compared to a merchant coming into his home port, laden with all kinds of treasures collected from abroad, upon which he has spent years of labor and incalculable wealth. Just as he enters the harbor his ship is torpedoed, and he saves nothing for all his trouble. In a similar manner, one who dies in mortal sin gains nothing, however numerous the good works he may in life have performed.

3. However numerous the merits previously earned by the sinner, however many his good works, if he dies with only one mortal sin on his soul he goes *to hell* forever.

Is this not something to be feared? It is because mortal sin presupposes a *hatred of God.* Let us be reasonable men, and consider the utter folly of selling our birthright, God and heaven, for the mess of pottage that is sin and its effects. "Then he will say to those on his left hand, 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire'" (Matt. 25:41).

What three things are necessary to make a sin mortal?—To make a sin mortal, these three things are necessary:

First, the thought, desire, word, action, or omission must be *seriously* wrong or considered seriously wrong.—The matter must be *grave,* something very important.

A slight act of vanity or impatience is not serious matter, but murder is. Things seriously evil are known to be such from Sacred Scripture, Tradition, the teachings of the Church, or from their nature.

Second, the sinner must be *mindful* of the serious wrong.—He must have full knowledge and reflection or attention, and know that what he does is grievous.

The person must know the malice and evil of what he is doing. A man who steals a precious diamond ring in the belief that it is glass has not full knowledge. A man who throws a lighted match thoughtlessly aside may throw it into a gasoline tank and cause an explosion, but he has not full attention. "For I formerly was a blasphemer, a persecutor and a bitter adversary; but I obtained the mercy of God because I acted ignorantly, in unbelief" (1 Tim. 1:13).

Third, the sinner must fully *consent* to it.—He must do it of his own free will, saying deliberately, "I will do this."

When one realizing what he is doing, still freely does it, he gives the matter deliberate consent. Therefore infants and idiots cannot commit mortal sin; they cannot fully realize what they do.

Is mortal sin a great evil?—Mortal sin is a great evil, the greatest evil in the world, a greater evil than disease, poverty, or war, because it separates us from God.

"But they that commit sin and iniquity are enemies to their own soul" (Job. 12:10).

1. It is a *rebellion* against and contempt of God, the blackest ingratitude towards Him.

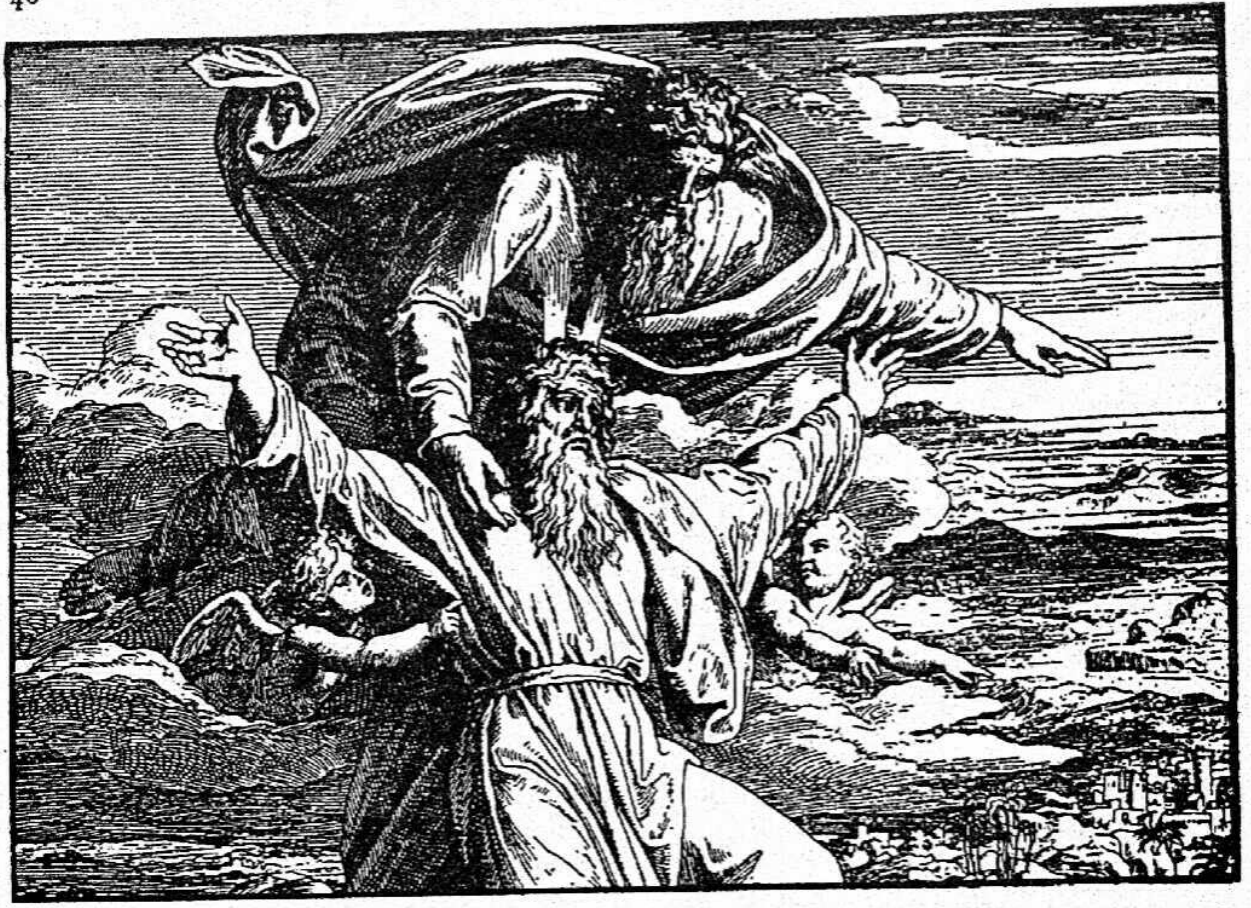
Our heavenly Father gave us everything we have, and in return we offend Him. We desecrate His temple. "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). By mortal sin a vile and insignificant creature offends and insults the infinite Creator.

2. It is *crucifying Christ* again, "since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and make him a mockery" (Heb. 6:6).

We can never fully realize the malice of mortal sin. We can get a small idea of it by remembering that God sent His own beloved Son to suffer untold agonies, to save us from its consequences.

3. Mortal sin must be a most terrible thing indeed to make a just and merciful God create hell for the everlasting punishment of the rebellious angels and of sinners who die with even *only one* mortal sin.

Even considering only its temporal penalties mortal sin is great folly. Upon it follows moral disquiet; the sinner loses the serenity and cheerfulness of the just soul. "The wicked are like the raging sea, that cannot rest" (Is. 57:20). Sickness and want are often consequences of sin, as well as loss of a good reputation.



We are prone to look upon venial sin as of no consequence, and to be careless about guarding against it, forgetting that it is second only in evil consequences to mortal sin. In Holy Scripture we see from many examples how God regards venial sin; even in this life He has punished it most severely. For only a slight doubt about God's mercy, because of the wickedness of his people, Moses was punished: he was not permitted to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land.

23. Venial Sin

What is venial sin?—Venial sin is a less serious offense against the law of God, which does not deprive the soul of sanctifying grace, and which can be pardoned even without sacramental confession.

1. A sin can be venial in two ways:

(a) When the evil done is not seriously wrong. If we sin against God in matters of *slight* importance, we commit venial sin.

Grumbling when told by your mother to open the window is not gravely wrong; it is a venial sin.

(b) When the evil done is seriously wrong, but the sinner sincerely believes it is only slightly wrong, or does it on the spur of the moment, without sufficient reflection, or *without full consent* of the will.

Stealing an expensive diamond ring is seriously wrong, but if the sinner took it in the belief that it was only a cheap imitation, the sin had not full consent, and is venial. If one eats meat on a day of abstinence, thinking it only a slight sin to do so; or if one in a sudden outburst of anger insults a companion seriously, he commits a venial sin for lack of sufficient reflection and consent.

2. Examples of venial sin are impatience, slight faultfinding, lies that harm nobody.

The word "venial" comes from the Latin *venialis,* meaning *easily pardonable.* Even the most just of mortals falls into venial sin again and again. God permits this to keep us humble. The most imperfect of mortals attains a very high degree of perfection as soon as he can avoid all *deliberate* venial sin: as soon as he does not commit any sin deliberately, with full advertence and consent.

3. If a person is in the state of grace, venial sins are *forgiven* in many ways without necessity of confession.

Provided one has sorrow and a sincere resolution not to commit the sins again, they are forgiven not only by Confession, but also by Holy Communion, by acts of contrition, prayer, good works, etc.

4. A distinction exists between venial sins and *imperfections*. Imperfections are faults that arise from ignorance or weakness, not from a bad will.

For instance involuntary distractions in prayer, "white lies" told while telling a story or in exaggerations or jokes, bad manners that hurt no one much, are imperfections. We should, however, try to avoid all imperfections, for they are not praiseworthy, are often a cause of irritation to others, and make us accustomed to doing what is not correct.

How does venial sin harm us?—Venial sin harms us by making us less fervent in the service of God, by weakening our power to resist mortal sin, and by making us deserving of God's punishments in this life or in purgatory.

1. Although venial sin is not a grievous offense against God, it is nevertheless a *great moral evil*, next alone to mortal sin.

It is like a drop of ink in a glassful of clear water; the ink, however little, takes away the clearness.

2. If often committed, venial sin *weakens* the will, lessens our power to resist evil, and makes it easier for us to fall into mortal sin.

"He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little" (Ecclus. 19:1). "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in a very little thing is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). A great fire is started by a tiny breeze. Venial sin, by weakening the will, makes us indisposed for good, and lukewarm in God's service.

3. Venial sin deprives us of many *actual graces* we need for resisting temptation.

When a mirror is dusty, it cannot reflect the image clearly; similarly the mirror of the soul, when dusty with venial sin, cannot reflect the light of grace and justice. God will not bestow his blessings and graces on one whose soul is disfigured by venial sin, as a distinguished personage is not expected to embrace a man who is disfigured by a skin disease.

4. Venial sin deprives us of heaven *for a time*.

If we die with venial sins on our souls, or without fully satisfying for them, we have to expiate for them in purgatory.

5. A great desire not to offend God in the least is the best *proof of love* and loyalty towards our heavenly Father.

Holy Scripture shows many instances of God's hatred for venial sin, which He punishes severely even on earth. For her curiosity, Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. "But I tell you, that of every idle word men speak, they shall give account on the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36).

How can we keep from committing sin?—We can keep from committing sin by praying and by receiving the sacraments; by remembering that God is always with us; by recalling that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost; by keeping occupied with work or play; by promptly resisting the sources of sin within us; by avoiding the near occasions of sin.

1. *Prayer* and the *sacraments* protect us from sin. They are like a strong fortress against which the enemy strikes in vain, and within which the soul remains safe in the grace of God.

When the Apostles were in danger on the lake of Genessareth, they had recourse to prayer. We are ever in danger from sin while we live; let us build up around us a rampart of prayer. God will protect us, as He protected the Apostles; He will answer our prayer. The soul nourished by the sacraments is strong, and will not easily succumb to sin; as a healthy body does not easily succumb to disease.

2. Even good people fall into sins, frequently because they forget *God's presence*. Let us remember that the eye of God is always upon us, every single moment. Then, if we love Him, we would never sin, never insult His presence by sin.

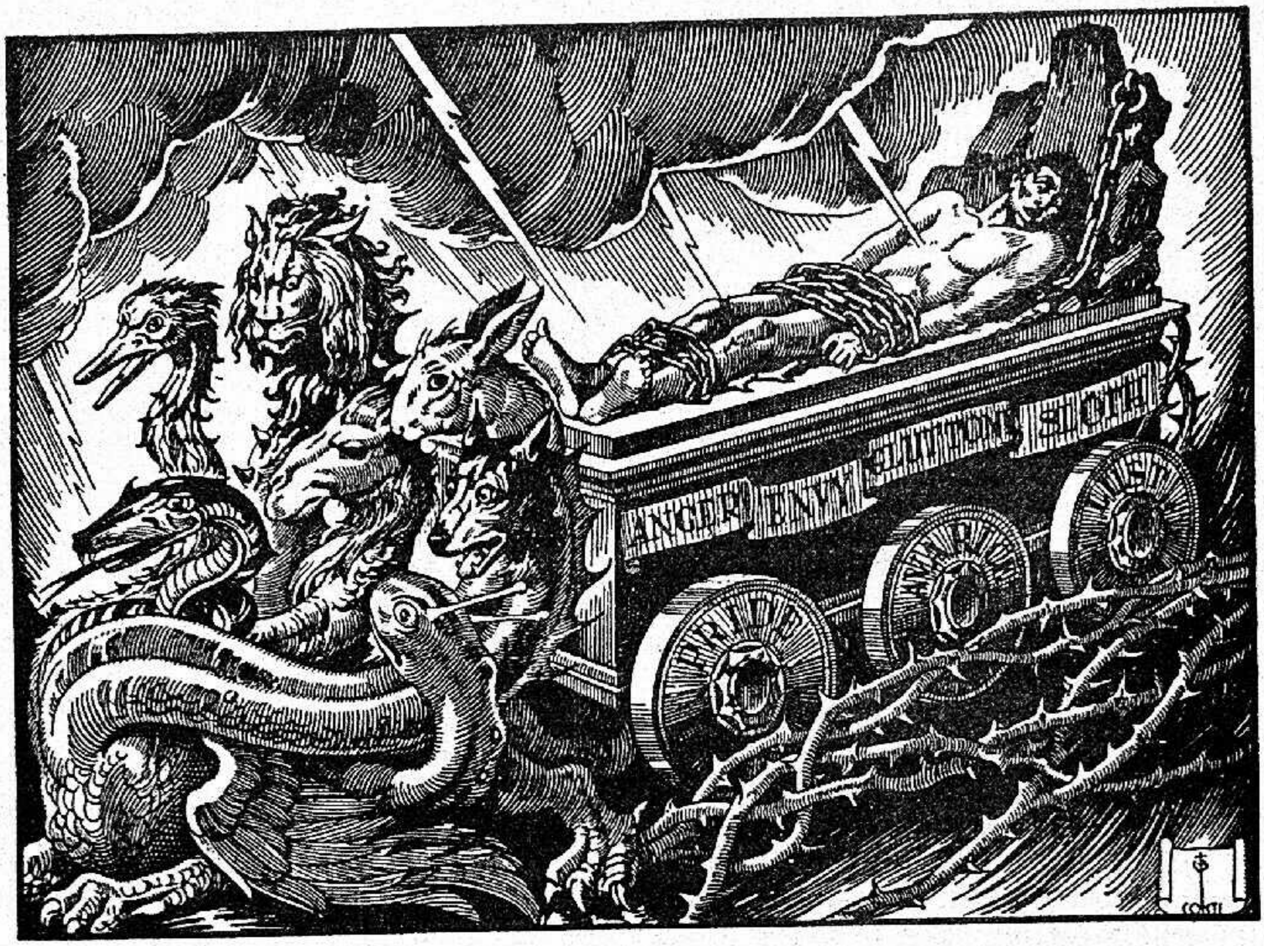
If we had a distinguished personage before us, would we commit indecent acts? Would we steal, or use bad language? But is not God the most distinguished of all persons, and is He not always looking on us?

3. When we are in the state of grace, our body is the *temple* of the Holy Ghost.

God dwells in it as Jesus Christ lives in the tabernacle. If we remember this always, we shall be greatly helped in avoiding sin.

4. The most practical way of avoiding sin is to *keep occupied* with work or play. Man must do something; if he does not do something good, he will do something evil.

A busy instrument cannot be used in doing mischief. Robbers will hesitate to enter a house where the occupants are busy. If we are occupied in doing good, we have no time to sit idly and wag our tongues in gossip.



Vice is easily formed, but requires great struggle to overcome it. The longer a man indulges in vice, the harder is the struggle. He becomes its slave. He is completely carried away by his passions. Only the great grace of God, coupled with a resolute will, can eradicate vice, once it is strongly rooted in a man's nature. This is one reason why we must be most careful to avoid sin, in order not to become victims of vice.

If we are so unfortunate as to fall into sin, we must at once repent and resolve to avoid it in the future.

24. Occasions and Sources of Sin

What are the near occasions of sin?—The near occasions of sin are all persons, places, or things that may easily lead us into sin.

Most common occasions are:

1. ***Bad companions.*** One who provokes or leads us into sin is not our friend. We must stop going with that companion.

One rotten apple in a basket of good apples quickly rots the rest. The same is true of human beings. Sin is a contagious disease. If we do not wish to be infected, we must go far away from it.

2. ***Dance halls.*** Not every dance is sinful. But many dances are occasions of sin; and public dances without the presence of respectable adults are extremely dangerous. A safe rule to follow is never to go to any place where you would be ashamed to take your virtuous mother or sister.

In many dances, the women tend to dress with extravagance and immodesty, just to "follow the fashion". Sometimes, too, dances are an occasion for the taking of liberties, due to late hours, and the spirit of unrestrained pleasure.

3. ***Bars and liquor saloons.*** These are very proximate occasions of sin, leading to intemperance, and worse evils.

Those who frequent saloons are likely to be not only habitual drunkards, but constant gamblers, who neglect their homes and duties, become involved in disputes, and finally end badly even in the temporal sense.

4. ***Obscene literature.*** Bad newspapers and magazines are no less dangerous because their wickedness is often not apparent, many hiding their evil under the guise of cleverness, science, art, etc.

Bad periodicals gradually undermine faith and make one *insensitive to evil*. It is the duty of every Catholic to subscribe to a Catholic periodical, and never to favor a wicked press.

5. ***Bad books.*** Many novels are harmless; some are very helpful, but many are positively wicked. We must be very careful in the selection of the books we read. There are national book clubs under Catholic auspices. Among them may be mentioned the *Catholic Book Club,* and the *Pro Parvulis Book Club,* headquarters of both of which are in New York City.

These book clubs send members lists of books of merit according to literary standards, and not offensive to Catholic morals. They publish reviews of current fiction most useful for the general reader. We must remember that poisonous food will only kill the body, but *poisonous reading kills the soul.*

6. ***Indecent pictures and shows.*** Today many moving pictures and theatrical shows are not decent. We must be careful to choose only the good, those approved by the *National Legion of Decency*. This Legion, working under the hierarchy, each week issues a list giving the moral evaluation of current films; it reviews and classifies. It asks every Catholic to take a pledge not to patronize lewd pictures.

This pledge is nothing extraordinary for any decent person, Catholic or non-Catholic; it merely puts down clearly something that any upright person is obliged in conscience to do.

The Legion of Decency was formed in order to unite the laity with the hierarchy in a persistent drive to prevent the showing of lewd pictures. If every decent person kept away from such obscene shows, the producers would surely make better pictures. Supply is according to the demand; we get what we ask for.

How should we act towards occasions of sin?—We should never seek, and always try to avoid, occasions of sin.

1. It is wrong voluntarily to ***seek*** the occasions of sin.

"He that loveth the danger shall perish in it" (Ecclus. 3:27). However, those who by their calling or other necessity are continually exposed to such dangerous occasions, as priests, officials, doctors, and others, must put their trust in God, Who will give them grace and protect them.

2. We must *avoid* occasions of sin as soon as we perceive them.

If one goes to the theatre and sees that the play is an indecent play, he must stand up and leave at once. Otherwise he commits a sin. He will fall into further sin, and commit besides the sin of not avoiding the occasion.

What are the chief sources of actual sin?—The chief sources of actual sin are: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth, and these are commonly called capital sins.

They are called *capital,* from the Latin *caput* (which means *head*), because they are the heads or sources of all sins. Thus they originate sins of luxury, gossip, excessive ambition, etc.

1. They are called capital sins, not because they are the greatest sins in themselves, but because they are the chief *reasons* why men commit sin. They are the *origin* of every sin, all other sins arising from them as from their fountainhead.

These sins are termed *deadly,* because they are either mortal of their own nature, or may easily become mortal. They may be mortal or venial according as the matter is serious or less serious.

2. These sins are called *vices,* because they produce permanent disorders in the soul. They are the seven *fatal diseases* of the soul, which end in death.

He who will be a friend of God must divest himself of these vices. Before we can plant the beautiful garden of virtues, we must root up the thorns and weeds growing out of these deadly sins.

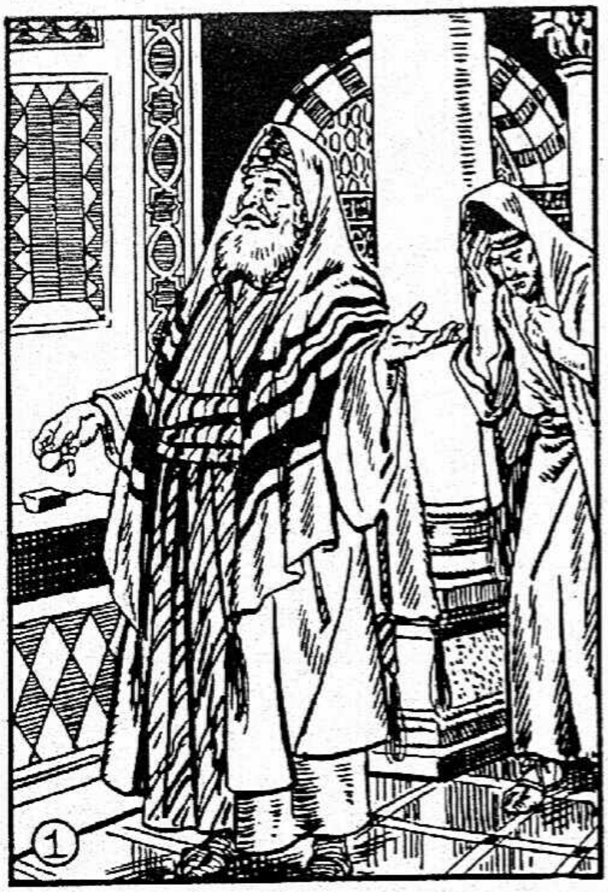
Does God punish sin?—Yes, God punishes sin, partly in this life, but chiefly after death.

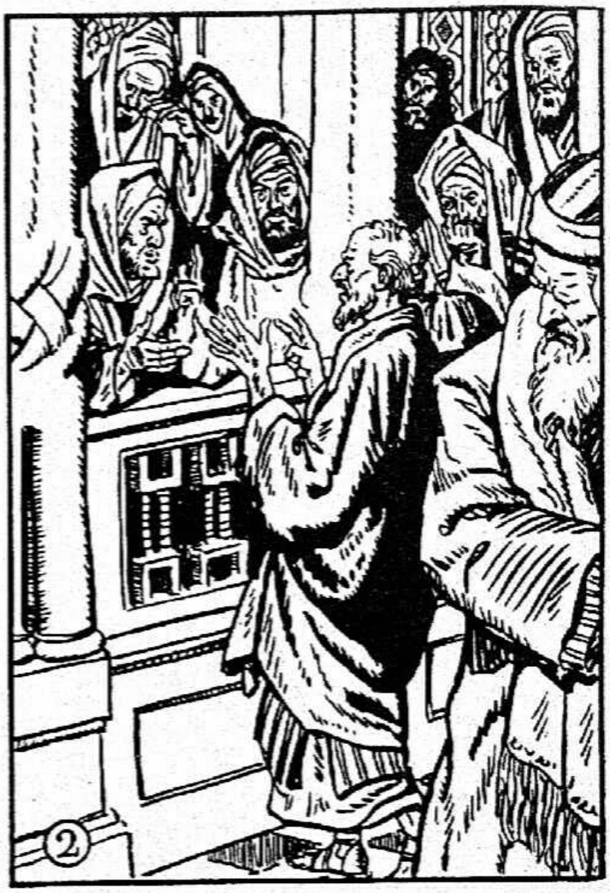
1. In this life sinners suffer from remorse of conscience, fear, and unhappiness. Their sin often brings upon them disease or death, the hatred and scorn of their fellow-men, and other temporal punishments. Even on earth, *"the wages of sin is death"*.

Thus a robber or murderer is ever *afraid* his crime will be detected. If it is discovered, he is sent to prison or to the electric chair.

2. The punishment of the sinner is fully meted out to him only ***after death.*** Then the unrepentant sinner is punished in ***hell.*** Justice is not always done in this world, where the wicked often prosper and the just are made to suffer.

On earth, God rewards the sinner for whatever good he may do. It is only in the next life that the evil he does is given its full and just punishment.





Pride makes one admire himself, in the belief that his excellence, imagined or real, is the result of his own worth. Our Lord condemned pride in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (1). Jesus said that the humble and repentant publican was justified in the eyes of God, while the proud Pharisee went home unjustified.

Covetousness is one of the ugliest of sins. It was a sin of Judas. He loved money so much that he even betrayed Our Lord for thirty pieces of silver (2).

25. Pride, Covetousness, Lust

What is pride?—Pride is an inordinate love of one's own excellence, an excessive self-esteem.

Our Lord is the best example of meekness and patience. Did He use His almighty power to punish those who did Him evil? For hours He hung meekly on the cross, until He died. Every day God is patient with sinners, giving them time to change their ways. God, the Supreme One, is not proud.

1. The proud man overestimates himself, and believes *himself the source* of his own excellence. The virtue of *humility*, which disposes us to acknowledge our limitations, is opposed to pride.

Some are proud of their appearance; others of their family, talents, position, money, and the virtues they *imagine* they possess. Even if we do have excellent abilities or possessions, we should not be proud of them, remembering that they all come from God. Instead, we should be humbly thankful, and see in what way we can make a return to God for such gifts. "Every proud man is an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. 16:5).

2. Pride may be called the *mother of all vices*, for most sins can be traced to it. From pride arise ambition, vanity, presumption, disobedience, hypocrisy, obstinacy in sin.

"For pride is the beginning of all sin: he that holdeth it shall be filled with maledictions and it shall ruin him in the end" (Ecclus. 10:15). "Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind or in thy words, for from it all perdition took its beginning" (Tob. 4:14). Pride was the sin of our First Parents, who wanted to be as great as God. It was the sin of King Pharaoh; he was so proud that in spite of the miracles Moses worked, he refused to be convinced. For this God "hardened his heart" (Exod. 9:12); that is, God permitted him to close the window of his soul against the grace of the Holy Ghost. "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord has rejected thee" (1 Kings 15:26).

3 The proud man tries to *attract notice* and praise, strives after honors, distinctions, and other worldly favors.

He is over-confident in himself, and despises the assistance of God. Pride was the sin of Lucifer. The proud man pretends to be greater than he is, and tries by all manner of means to attract the praise of others, even using false humility to do so.

4. God *hates pride*, and punishes it severely. He often punishes secret pride by withdrawing His assistance from the proud man. And deprived of God's aid, the proud man often falls into grievous sins leading to his humiliation.

"The beginning of the pride of man is to fall off from God" (Ecclus. 10:14). "God resists the proud" (1 Pet. 5:5). "Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled" (Luke 14:11). Thus the proud King Herod was eaten up by worms and died. Thus, the proud Roman Empire fell and became nothing. Our Lord pointed out the pride in the heart of the Pharisee, and praised the humble publican.

5. If we, however, despise *sin* as beneath us, that is not pride, but a virtuous self-respect.

A decent regard for cleanliness and neatness is not vanity. The ambition to exceed in good things, as in studies, in order to make the best use of God's gifts, is to be commended. God wishes us to be His *excellent children*. (*See pages* 88-89.)

What is covetousness?—Covetousness is the excessive love for, and seeking after, wealth and other worldly possessions.

1. Covetousness is also called avarice. A covetous person strives for more riches than he requires, and is *never content*, however much he already possesses.

He greedily clings to what he has, and is *stingy* and hates to give anything away. For money Judas betrayed the Lord. "There is not a more wicked thing than to love money: for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale" (Ecclus. 10:10). "Take heed and guard yourselves from all covetousness, for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

We meet with covetous persons among both rich and poor. Often among the rich there is money without avarice, and among the poor, avarice without money.

2. From covetousness arise hard-heartedness towards the poor, lying, cheating, usury, defrauding laborers of wages, and other sins.

"Those who seek to become rich fall into temptation and a snare . . . For covetousness is the root of all evils" (1 Tim. 6:9-10). It *destroys faith*, for the avaricious are so absorbed in money-getting that they have no time for their spiritual welfare.

3. To provide for one's future and that of one's family is praiseworthy. To *avoid waste and extravagance* is a virtue.

To accumulate even considerable wealth, by proper means, is not wrong. The rich, however, must remember their obligation to use their wealth for the glory of God, not for their own pride.

4. *Liberality*, which disposes us rightly to use worldly goods, is opposed to covetousness. (*See page* 89.)

The avaricious man is very *foolish*. He works hard all his life and becomes hated by men: he earns besides eternal damnation after death and all *for nothing*. When he dies all he has are a few feet of earth for his grave; his money is left to heirs who most probably ridicule his miserliness or waste the money to gain which he lost his soul. "For when he shall die, he shall take nothing away: nor shall his glory descend with him" (Ps. 48:18).

What is lust?—Lust is the inordinate seeking of the pleasures of the flesh.

1. Lust defiles a man as no other sin does. It degrades man to the level of *the beast*. Pride is the sin commited by Lucifer, avarice by Judas, and lust by the brute.

Of all vices, lust is most severely *punished on earth*. It leads to loss of health and reason. It was the cause of the Deluge. It was the cause for the destruction with fire and brimstone of Sodom and Gomorrha. "But immorality and every uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becomes saints" (Ephes. 5:3).

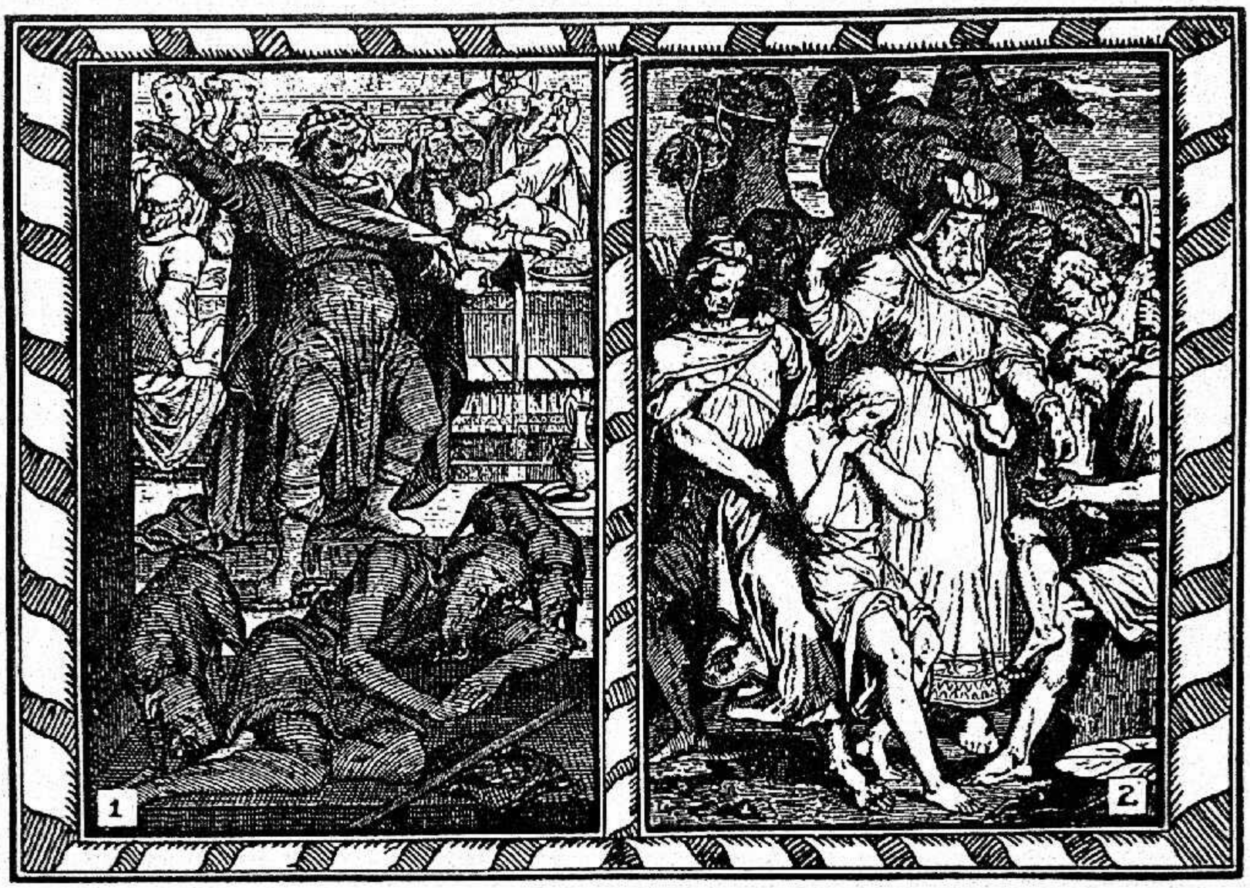
2. Those tempted to lust should remember that man was made to the image and *likeness of God*. Will they so rashly destroy that image, to make themselves like to beasts? In fact, beasts are better than lustful men, for beasts act in that manner from instinct; they have no soul like God.

Impurity weakens the will and darkens the understanding. For this reason amendment is very difficult, and the sinner falls into many other sins. So Solomon, who yielded to lust, finally lost all his wisdom and turned to worship false gods.

3. From lust spring jealousy, hatred, murder, loss of faith, despair, instability, worldliness, selfishness, and other sins.

The *consequences* of lust are seen in the case of Henry VIII. It was the cause of his apostasy, and his apostasy dragged an entire nation into similar apostasy. "For know this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous one (for that is idolatry) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Ephes. 5:5). (*See page* 89.)

4. Sodomy, or sins against purity by persons of the same sex, is a form of lust.



Our Lord showed how hateful gluttony is in the parable of the rich man, Dives, and the poor Lazarus (1). Dives was so greedy that he would not even give scraps to Lazarus, who sat at his gate. But when Dives died, he went to hell, while Lazarus went to heaven. The brothers of Joseph (2) were so envious of him that they sold him to some merchants going to Egypt. God rebuked their sin by blessing Joseph in Egypt, and causing him to be in a position to help his envious brothers later.

26. Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth

What is anger?—Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure, combined with a desire to punish the offender.

1. An angry man loses his *reason.* In anger a man will do what he afterwards regrets. From anger arise hatred, revenge, blasphemy, cursing, fighting, and murder. The virtues of patience and *meekness* are opposed to anger. (*See pages* 90-91.)

Anger, or wrath, is a temporary madness. A man with this vice flies into a rage at every little thing. He always puts the blame of his anger on others, and even when he is alone he gets angry. "The wrath of man does not work the justice of God" (Jas. 1:20).

Wilful murder, one of the "sins that cry to heaven for vengeance," arises from anger.

When the first willful murder took place, and Cain killed his brother Abel, God said to Cain, "The voice of thy brother's blood *crieth to me* from the earth" (Gen. 4:10).

2. He who indulges in anger injures his health, becomes hated, incurs damnation.

Many men have had a stroke of paralysis brought on by anger; some have even died. If anger is so hurtful to the body, how much more to the soul!

3. When we feel ourselves becoming angry, we should *never speak or act,* but try to calm ourselves by prayer.

St. Francis de Sales said: "I have made an agreement with my tongue never to utter a word while my heart is excited." "Let every man be slow to *speak* and slow to wrath" (Jas. 1:19).

4. If we should be so unhappy as to have offended anyone by our anger, we should hasten to *apologize.*

"Do not let the sun go down upon your anger" (Ephes. 4:26).

5. A ***just anger*** against sin and injustice is praiseworthy. We may hate the sin, but not the sinner.

Christ had this just wrath when He drove the sellers from the Temple. Holy Scripture says, "Be angry and do not sin" (Ephes. 4:26).

What is gluttony?—Gluttony is an excessive desire for or indulgence in food or drink.

1. Gluttony is greediness, intemperance in eating and drinking. Of the gluttonous, St. Paul said that "their god is the belly" (Phil 3:19). We should not be either too *greedy* or too *dainty* about the nourishment we take. The virtue opposed to gluttony is *temperance*.

We should not eat more than we need to support life. *"We do not live to eat, but eat to live."* We must not take what is injurious to health, even if its taste is pleasing. We must have regular hours for our meals. We should not be too particular about food, eat what is set before us, and not get angry when a dish is not very appetizing. The purpose of food is to give strength for the work we do while still on earth preparing for our final end.

2. Gluttony produces dullness of mind, laziness, and sensuality. The vice of *drukenness* is a terrible evil, leading to worse sins. A man when drunk loses his reason, and often makes a fool of himself. If reason is the chief difference between man and the beast, why should one extinguish it by drunkenness?

"The sensual man does not perceive the things that are of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14). "He who sows in his flesh, from the flesh also he will reap corruption" (Gal. 6:8). It is well for young people to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages and smoking till after they are twenty years of age. If they do this, the likehood is that they will not contract vice. (*See page* 91.)

What is envy?—Envy is a bitter feeling at the excellence or good fortune of those who are better or happier, with a desire to rob them of what they have.

1. Envy *consists* in discontent or anger at the success of another, as though it were evil to oneself. It also consists in rejoicing over another's misfortune, as if it were a good to oneself.

Envy is against the commandment of God to love our neighbor. It is the mark of the *petty mind* and the *hard heart*. The devil envied Adam and Eve in Paradise; Cain envied Abel, whose offering was pleasing to God. Some are so envious that they even envy the holiness of others, but without any desire or attempt at imitation. This was the case with the Pharisees, and their envy led them to plot the death of Jesus Christ.

2. Envy *leads* to calumny, gossip, detraction, hatred, scandal, and other sins. An envious man looks on everything with malice; as a result his envy does not even make himself happy, but destroys his peace of heart.

The sons of Jacob were envious of their brother Joseph because he was the favorite son. Their envy led them to sell him into Egypt. Often the envy in a man's heart causes him to be so soured on the world that he sells himself for nothing to the devil.

3. A form of envy, one of the greatest sins, is *envy at another's spiritual good*. This is a most diabolical sin; it shows that the sinner has closed his heart against the charity of God, and instead houses God's enemy, Satan. The virtue *opposed* to envy is charity, or brotherly love. (*See page* 91.)

What is sloth?—Sloth is the neglect of one's duties, spiritual or temporal, through laziness.

1. The rule of the universe is activity; life and movement may be found in all nature. The slothful man is the exception; and he by his laziness goes against nature.

"Go to the ant, O sluggard, and consider her ways, and learn wisdom" (Prov. 6:6). The slothful keep putting off doing anything till tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, which often never comes.

2. Many complain of *hard luck*, but often misfortunes come from laziness. The virtues of *diligence* and *zeal* are opposed to sloth.

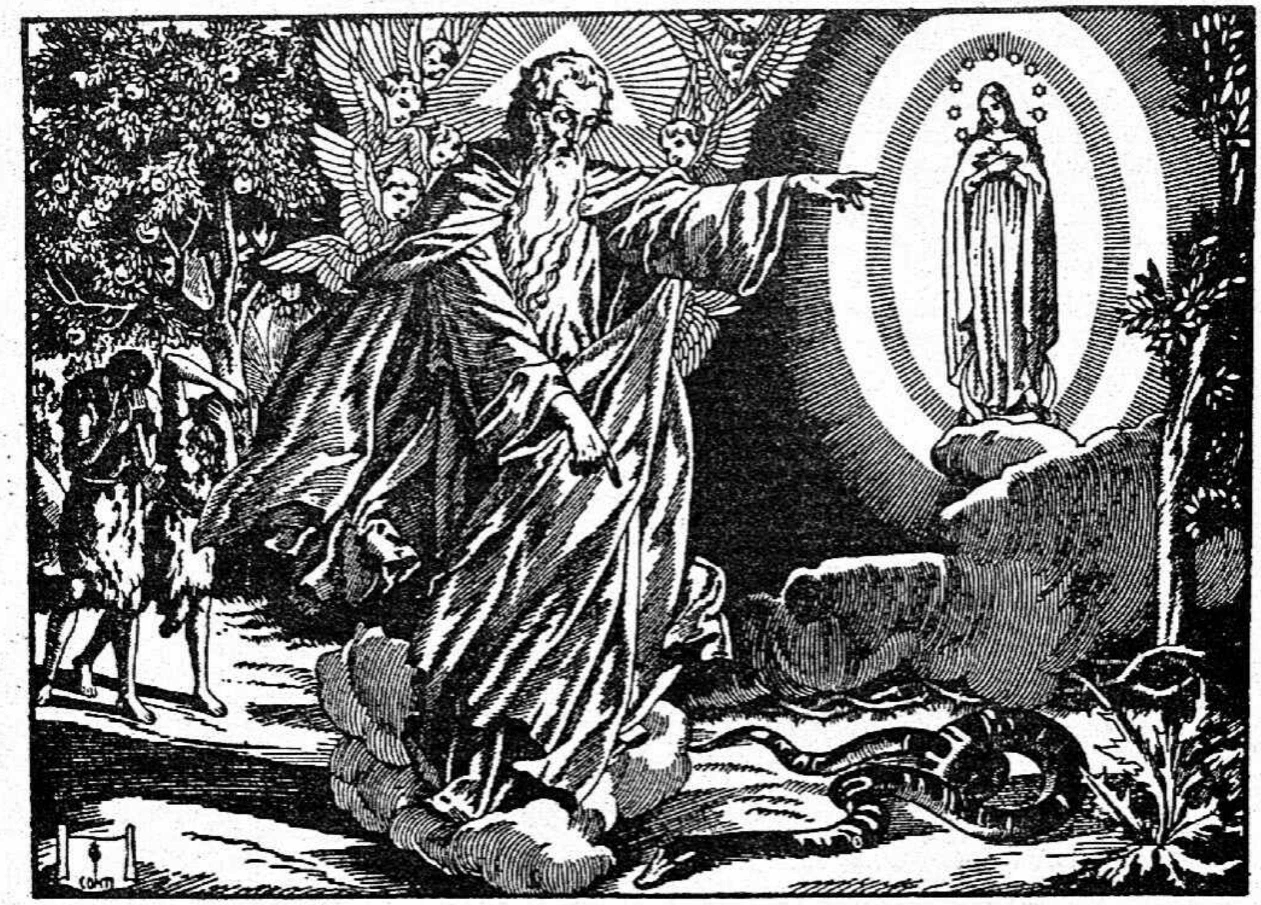
Even on earth, most rewards go only to the industrious and energetic.

3. Spiritual sloth is called *lukewarmness*. It is also called *tepidity*.

The lukewarm person would like to have the rewards given by God, but will not move a finger to serve Him. As soon as it is necessary to exert himself, he shrinks from the effort. *Great sinners* have been known to *become great saints*, but the lukewarm, never. Holy Scripture says: "I would that thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit thee out of my mouth" (Apoc. 3:15, 16).

4. Sloth leads to many sins; *idleness begets vice*. The lazy neglect good works.

If man has no useful occupation, his natural activity turns to all kinds of mischief. A busy person avoids many temptations. (*See page* 91.)



Immediately after the Fall, God promised a Redeemer to Adam. He forgave man, although He had not forgiven the rebel angels. He was more merciful to man than to the angels. In making the promise, God spoke of the Blessed Virgin, who was to be the Saviour's Mother.

27. The Promise of the Redeemer

(Second Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

Did God abandon man after Adam fell into sin?—God did not abandon man after Adam fell into sin, but promised to send into the world a Saviour to free man from his sins and to reopen to him the gates of heaven.

God could have abandoned man as a consequence of Adam's sin; then the human race would have suffered eternal separation from Him.

1. The promise was first made to *Adam* before God sent him out of Paradise. God said to the serpent who had tempted Eve: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head" (Gen. 3:15).

In this passage, the woman spoken of is the Blessed Virgin Mary. Her seed is Our Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Redeemer promised by God. God said that there would be complete enmity between Our Lord with His Mother on one side, and the devil with his followers on the other.

2. This promise was renewed several times *to the Patriarchs* of the Old Testament: to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Because Abraham remained true to the worship of God in the midst of idolatry, God led him to Canaan. As a reward for his obedience, God promised, "I will make of thee a great nation . . . and in thee shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2, 3). This promise was repeated twice.

The same promise "in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed" was repeated to Abraham's son Isaac, and to Isaac's son Jacob. Finally, hundreds of years later, God commanded the prophet Nathan to repeat to King David the very same promise, "He shall build a house to My name, and I will establish his kingdom forever" (2 Kings 7:13).

3. Later, God sent *the Prophets*. Through

them He foretold many things about the Redeemer: about His birth, His Person, His sufferings, His death, and His final glory.

God enlightened the Prophets so that they could speak in His name to the Jews or Israelites, the descendants of Abraham. There were about seventy prophets, the last being Malachias, who lived some 450 years before Christ.

4. God chose the *Jews* as the people among whom the promised Saviour would live; for this reason we call the Jews the "chosen people". God prepared them for the coming of the Saviour: by heavy trials, by severe laws, by miracles, by prophecies.

The selection of the Jews did not mean rejection by God of the *other nations*. Every renewal of God's promise recalled blessings in which all were to share. Even among other nations there were just men. In Greece, Socrates spoke against the worship of idols. Holy Job lived in Arabia. The Magi were of the East. Vergil the poet prayed the *virgin-born* Son to come and reign over His people.

Why did God wait thousands of years before sending the Redeemer?—God wished men to realize the enormity of sin.

1. God wished men to see how low they could sink without His help. He wanted the world to *prepare* for the Redeemer.

Men became so *wicked* that God destroyed all in the Deluge, except Noe and his family. God permitted men to sink into the deepest *misery*, so that they might be roused to a longing for the promised Saviour. When the Saviour at last came, all nations were sunk in *idolatry* and wickedness except the Jews. Even among the Jews there was continuous dissension and sin.

2. From the time of Adam the true religion was *preserved* till the advent of the promised Saviour by the patriarchs, prophets and other holy men inspired by God to teach and lead his Chosen People.

In spite of the imperfection of the old religion, there was always *only one* true religion. It was but a shadow of the perfection that was to come, but was the true religion before Christ: the Jewish Faith.

Who is the Saviour of all men?—The Saviour of all men is Jesus Christ.

Men would know the Saviour by certain signs which God revealed through the Prophets.

1. Of His *advent* the Prophets spoke:

(a) The Messias was to be born in Bethlehem, when the Jews were no longer free.

"And Thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity" (Mich. 5:2). "The scepter shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations" (Gen. 49:10).

(b) The Messias was to be born of a virgin of the House of David.

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Is. 7:14).

(c) The Messias would be preceded by a precursor who would preach in the desert.

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert the paths of our God" (Is. 40:3).

(d) A new star was to announce the birth of the Messias; He would be adored by kings from distant lands bringing Him gifts.

"A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a scepter shall spring up from Israel" (Numb. 24:17). "The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts" (Ps. 71:10).

(e) Many children would be put to death at the time of His birth.

"A voice was heard on high of lamentation, or mourning, and weeping, of Rachel (representing the Jews) weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are not" (Jer. 31:15).

2. Of the *person* of the Messias the Prophets spoke: He was to be the Son of God. He would work great miracles, and teach the people. He would be King of a new kingdom, which was not to be destroyed, and was to include all nations.

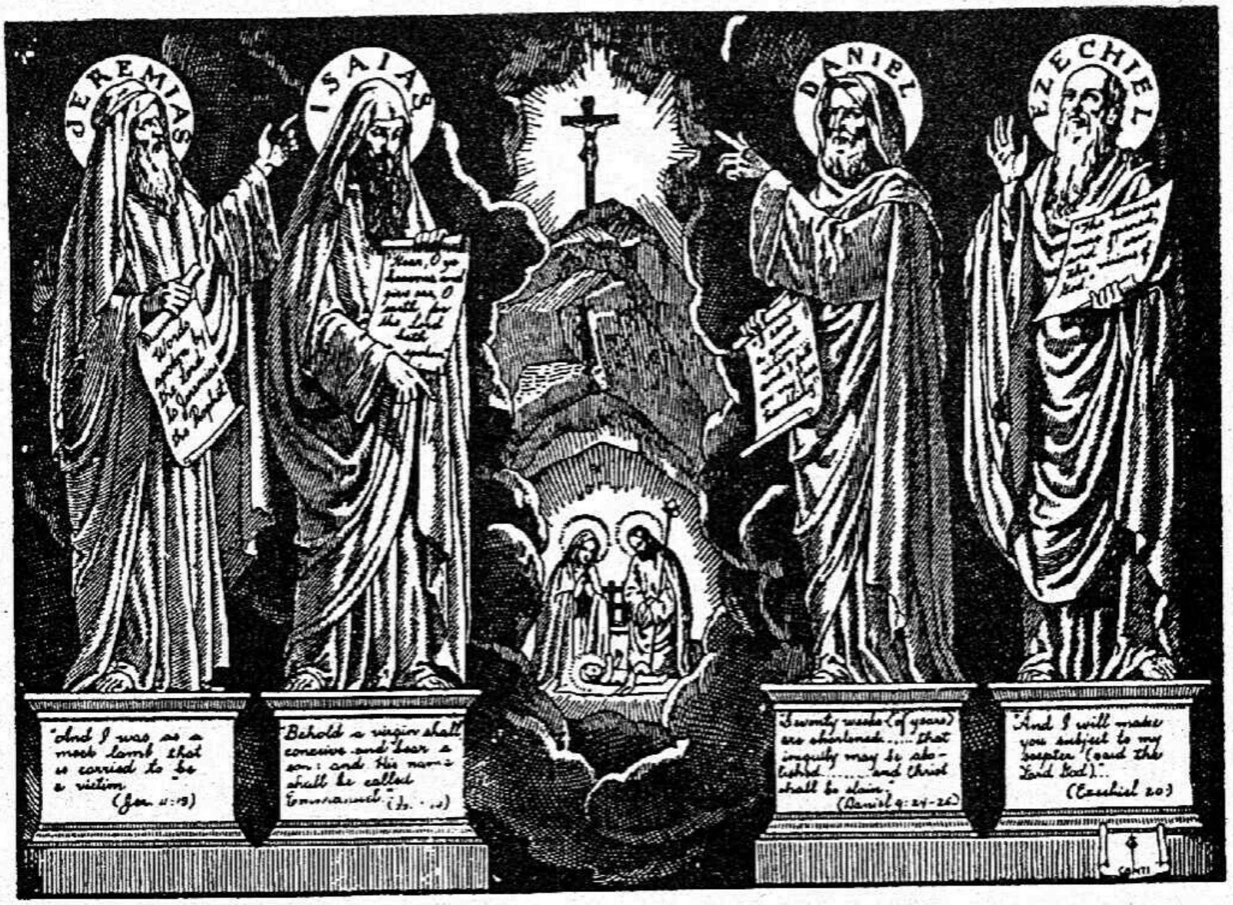
"The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. 2:7). "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Is. 35:5-6). "The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed... and it shall consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).

3. Of His *sufferings* the Prophets spoke:

He was to enter Jerusalem riding on an ass. He would be betrayed by one who ate at the same table with Him. He would be abandoned, mocked, beaten, spat upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, and given gall and vinegar to drink. Lots would be cast for His garments. His hands and feet would be pierced with nails. He would die between two evildoers.

4. All the *prophecies* were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is the Redeemer, the Saviour that God in His mercy had promised.

The *angels* announced Him as the Redeemer to the shepherds when He was born, and to St. Joseph in a vision. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son" (John 3:16).


JEREMIAS
ISAIAS
DANIEL
EZECHIEL
"And I was as a meek lamb that is carried to be a victim (Jer. 11:19)
"Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son: and His name shall be called Emmanuel."
Seventy weeks (of years) are shortened..... that iniquity may be abolished........and Christ shall be slain." (Daniel 9:24-26)
"And I will make you subject to my scepter (said the Lord God)." (Ezechiel 20)
CONTI

Throughout the centuries God sent prophets to predict different events and facts concerning the promised Saviour. Among the most important prophets were Jeremias, Isaias, Daniel, and Ezechiel. Daniel predicted the exact time of the birth of the Redeemer. He said His kingdom would have no end, and would embrace all kingdoms. Isaias prophesied that the Messias would be born of a virgin, would be both God and Man, and would die patiently and willingly like a lamb for our sins.

28. The God-Man

What is the chief teaching of the Catholic Church about Jesus Christ?—The chief teaching of the Catholic Church about Jesus Christ is that He is God made man.

1. ***Christ Himself*** said that He is God. The *Jews* understood His claim literally, and He was condemned to death for blasphemy, for *making Himself the Son of God.*

Christ said: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18). "And the high priest said to him, 'I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said to him, 'Thou hast said it'" (Matt. 26:63). "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

2. ***Christ*** *proved* His claims by wonderful miracles, by prophecies, by His knowledge of all things, and by the holiness of His life. These miracles Christ worked *in His own name,* not as His followers did, who worked in the name of God. He simply said: "I will, be thou made clean" (Matt. 8:3).

Christ Himself *appealed to His miracles* as a testimony of the truth of His doctrines and divinity, saying: "If you are not willing to believe me, believe the works" (John 10:38). Christ *foretold* future events. Among other things, He predicted His passion, death, and resurrection, the treason of Judas and the perpetuity of His Church.

3. The ***Apostles,*** the followers of Christ Himself, plainly taught that Christ is God, and died in testimony of their faith.

St. John says: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." "And the Word was made Flesh." St. Paul writes: "In him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). St. Thomas openly professed the divinity of Christ when he said: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). St. Peter said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

4. The ***Church*** teaches that Jesus Christ is God. Its teachings have spread throughout all nations, in spite of untold obstacles.

The Church has grown by the simplest of means, its spread ever accompanied by wonderful miracles, by which God designs to show forth the truth of the Church. The doctrine of the divinity of Christ is the foundation of the Christian religion.

5. Even the *enemies* of the Catholic Church have admitted their belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Napoleon, about to die, said: "I know men, but Jesus Christ was more than man. My men deserted me in the field when I was there leading them. Christ's army has been faithful for centuries. A Leader who has an army which functions though He is dead is not man."

Why is Jesus Christ God?—Jesus Christ is God because He is the only Son of God, having the same divine nature as His Father.

"And they all said, 'Art thou, then, the Son of God?' He answered, 'You yourselves say that I am.' And they said, 'What further need have we of witness? For we have heard it ourselves from his own mouth'" (Luke 22:70-71).

1. Man after the Fall was unable to regain of himself his former holiness. He became like a sick man who could not arise from bed. He *needed Someone* to raise him up. Since the sin he had committed had been an offense against an Infinite God, the atonement needed had to be by an Infinite One, the Son of God Himself.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

2. Christ is called the ***"Word"***. Just as the thought in our minds finds expression in a word, so the Son of God dwelling in the bosom of His Father was shown to the world when the Word became man.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14).

Why is Jesus Christ man?—Jesus Christ is man, because He is the Son of the Blessed Virgin, and has a body and soul like ours.

1. The birth of Jesus Christ is a fact of *history*. He was born of Mary, who was espoused to a carpenter named Joseph, who lived in Nazareth of Galilee.

The archangel Gabriel said to Mary, "The Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God."

2. Jesus Christ is *true man*, because He has a body and soul like ours. He derived His human nature from His mother.

History tells us of Jesus Christ, Who preached in and about Jerusalem over nineteen hundred years ago. Many records tell of His appearance, of His words, of His actions, of His teachings. Nobody doubted that Jesus Christ was a Man, for He could be seen and touched like other men. He lived and died just as men of all times live and die.

How can we prove that the religion God has revealed through Christ is worthy of belief?—We can prove that the religion God has revealed through Christ is worthy of belief, because:

1. Jesus Christ, announcing Himself as the true Son of God, whose coming was foretold by the prophets, preached doctrines which He said all *must* believe.

If Christ is God, then the religion He established is true, and the Church He founded is the true Church. We can believe everything He says, even without understanding it, because God cannot err.

If Jesus Christ were not God, then Christianity would be a farce, and the sooner it were done away with the better. If Christ were not God, then He were an impostor who, by claiming divinity, had led billions into error for almost 2,000 years.

2. Christ worked wonderful *miracles*, which showed that the God of truth approved His teachings.

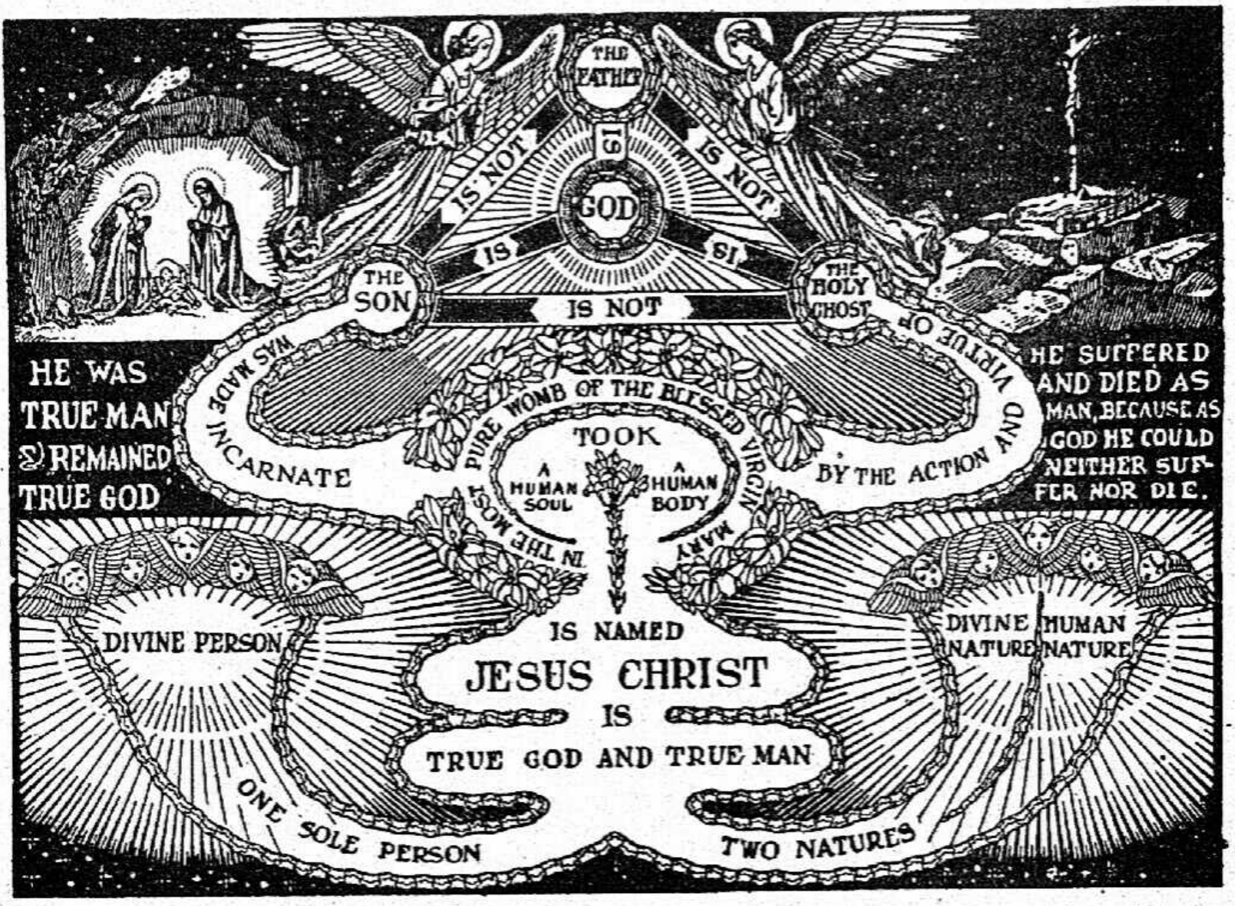
Christ worked so many miracles publicly that all flocked to Him to be cured. "But when John had heard in prison of the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples to say to him, 'Art thou he who is to come, or shall we look for another?' And Jesus answering said to them, 'Go and report to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise, the poor have the gospel preached to them'" (Matt. 11:2-5).

(a) Christ performed miracles on inanimate objects, as when He changed water to wine, calmed the storm, multiplied loaves.

(b) He healed in an instant the sick, the blind, the lame. He expelled devils.

(c) He raised the dead to life; as the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Naim, and Lazarus. Even His enemies acknowledged His miracles. The Pharisees planned to kill Lazarus, because the Jews believed in Jesus as a result of the miracle.

(d) He worked miracles on His own Person, as in the Transfiguration, Resurrection, and Ascension.


THE FATHER
IS
GOD
IS NOT
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THE HOLY GHOST
WAS MADE INCARNATE
IN THE MOST PURE WOMB OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
BY THE ACTION AND VIRTUE OF
TOOK
A HUMAN SOUL
A HUMAN BODY
IS NAMED
JESUS CHRIST
IS
TRUE GOD AND TRUE MAN
HE WAS TRUE MAN & REMAINED TRUE GOD
HE SUFFERED AND DIED AS MAN, BECAUSE AS GOD HE COULD NEITHER SUFFER NOR DIE.
DIVINE PERSON
DIVINE NATURE
HUMAN NATURE
ONE SOLE PERSON
TWO NATURES

Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true Man. As God, He is equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost: He is infinite, almighty, eternal. As man He has a body and soul like ours. Jesus Christ has two natures which cannot be separated, but which are distinct: the human, and the divine. But He is only one Person—the Divine Person. Jesus Christ is not a human Person.

29. Our Lord Jesus Christ

Is Jesus Christ more than one Person?—No, Jesus Christ is only one Person; and that Person is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Throughout the Gospels we can read about Jesus Christ as only one Person,—eating, sleeping, talking, and dying, as only one Person.

1. A "person" is a being that is intelligent and free, and *responsible* for his actions. We attribute to him whatever good or evil he does in the use of his human powers, because he owns or controls those powers.

I am a human person, and everything I do is done by a human person. But Christ is a *Divine Person*, since He is God. Whatever Jesus Christ did while He was on earth was of infinite dignity, since it was the work of a Divine Person.

2. Jesus Christ is Our Lord, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God and true Man. We call Him ***"Our Lord"*** because as God He is Lord and Master of all, and as our Saviour He redeemed us with His Blood.

Christ is our Creator, Redeemer, Lawgiver, Teacher, and Judge. All these we mean when we say *Our Lord*. St. Paul says: "He is the Blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords . . . to whom be honor and everlasting dominion. Amen" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16).

3. There is only ***one Person,*** the Divine Person, in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is *not* a human person. Everything in Him even as Man is divine and worthy of adoration.

When we adore the Sacred Heart, or the Precious Blood, we do not adore mere flesh, but the flesh united to the divinity. In Christ the human and the divine are inseparable.

How many natures has Jesus Christ?—Jesus Christ has two natures: the nature of God and the nature of man.

1. A "nature" is a substance that is complete in itself as a source of activity. It differs from "person" in that while "person" determines what an individual *is*, "nature" determines what an individual can *do*.

In Jesus Christ Our Lord there are two natures: His divine and His human nature. Therefore He could and did act as God; He could and did act as man, while all the time He was God the Son.

2. Because of His Divine nature, Christ is truly *God;* because of His human nature, He is truly *man*. In His Divine nature He is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, God the Son, the Eternal Word. He took His human nature from His Mother.

It was to the Blessed Virgin that the Archangel Gabriel announced: "And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1:32).

Therefore Jesus Christ is both God and man; He has both Divine and human powers; He has knowledge, can will and act as God and as man. For example, with His human nature Jesus worked, ate, spoke, felt pain. But it was His divine nature that enabled Him to become transfigured, walk on the waters, raise the dead.

3. These *two natures* were united in a Divine Person Jesus Christ, the God-Man. They were intimately united, but they remained *distinct*. Neither was absorbed by the other. When iron and gold are welded into one solid mass, they continue to retain all their individual properties distinct from each other. The union of the divine and human natures in Christ is called the *hypostatic* union.

Christ is true God and true man; this is why we call Him God-Man. Beings obtain their nature from their origin; for this reason a child has a human nature, from its human parents. Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, has His origin from God the Father, and hence He has a divine nature; moreover, as man He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and thus His human nature. This is why Christ often referred to Himself indiscriminately as "Son of God" or "Son of Man."

4. As a consequence of these two natures, Christ had also two *wills*.

We can see this very clearly in His prayer in the Garden of Olives before His Passion. He said: "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." He was referring to His human will, for His divine will was surely the same as His Father's.

What does the name Jesus mean?—The name Jesus means *Saviour* or Redeemer.

1. Our Lord is called ***Jesus*** because He came to save men from sin, and to open the doors of heaven to them.

Before the birth of Our Lord, an angel appeared to St. Joseph and said: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus" (Matt. 1:21). At the Annunciation the angel Gabriel had spoken the same words to Mary.

"After eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, His name was called Jesus" (Luke 2:21).

2. We should say the name of Our Lord with great *reverence*. We should bow our head every time we utter it.

"In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). The symbol IHS is composed of the first three letters of the name *Jesus* in Greek.

What does the name Christ mean?—The name Christ means "The Anointed One".

1. "Christ" is a Greek word, with the same meaning as "Messias". In the Old Law it was the custom to *anoint with oil* prophets, high priests, and kings.

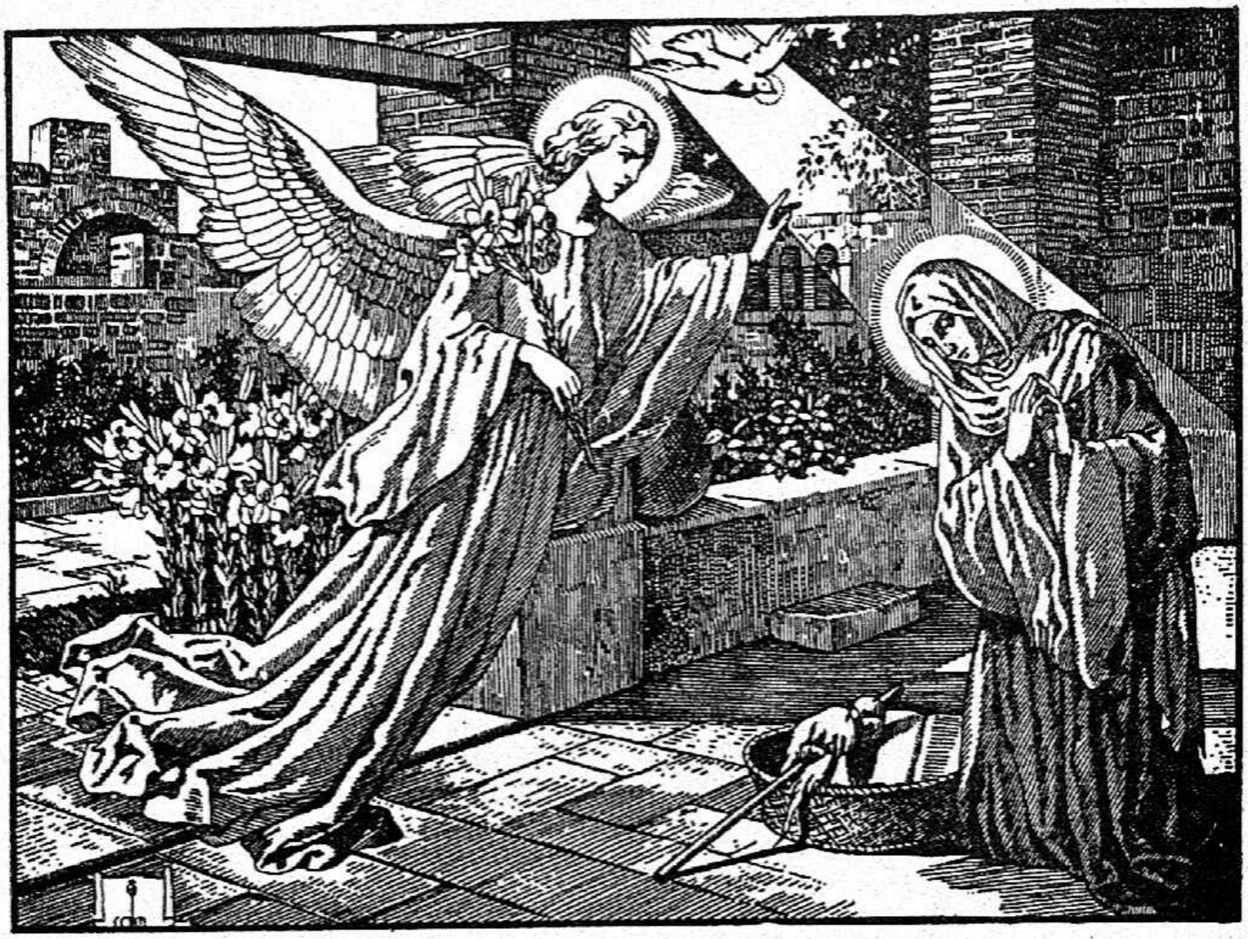
Our Lord is the greatest of the Prophets. He is the High Priest Who offers Himself for all mankind. He is the King of angels and men. Therefore it is fitting that we should call Him *Christ*. He truly is the Anointed One.

2. We are called ***Christians*** because we are disciples of Christ. We believe in His teachings, and obey His commandments. The followers of Christ were first called *Christians* at Antioch.

Those who deny the doctrines of Christ, especially His divinity, are not Christians. Unfortunately, many today are Christians only in name.

3. Jesus Christ was announced to the world through many *types*. By "types" we mean persons or actions which strongly suggested or foreshadowed Christ. "Types" are to the reality what a photograph is to the actual person; but for lack of the reality, types are a good substitute, to give an idea of the substance foreshadowed.

Some of the types of Jesus Christ were: the gentle and just Abel, who was murdered by his brother; Noe, who alone persevered and saved the human race from extinction by his justice; Isaac, who willingly carried the wood on which he was to have been sacrificed; Joseph, who was sold for a few pieces of silver, but later saved his brethren from death; Moses, who freed the Jews from slavery and led them to the Promised Land; David, who was born poor, did great deeds for his people, and became King.



"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin bethrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And when the angel had come to her, he said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.' When she had seen him she was troubled at his word, and kept pondering what manner of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus'" (Luke 1:26-31).

30. The Incarnation

(Third Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

What is meant by the Incarnation?—By the Incarnation is meant that the Son of God, retaining His Divine nature, took to Himself a human nature, that is, a body and soul like ours.

1. The Incarnation is the greatest act of *humility* possible. By it the Son of God, eternal, almighty, infinite, voluntarily took upon Himself human nature with its weaknesses. He circumscribed Himself with a human body that would feel sickness and pain, and with a human soul that would cause Him agony.

Incarnation means *"becoming flesh."* Thus the Son of God took a human body and soul and united it to His divine Person. Without ceasing to be God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man at the same time. The divine nature of Christ is from all eternity. Only His *human nature* began at the Incarnation.

2. By virtue of the Incarnation Jesus Christ came to earth. This is a *mystery* which we can never fully understand, but must be content to honor and adore.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Christ as man was *like us* in all things except sin. He could not sin, because He is God. But in all other things He was like us: he had a human body, a human soul, a human will. Can we understand this with our reason? Hardly. As St. John

Chrysostom said: "I know that the Son of God became man, but how, I do not know." God, Who produced the universe from nothing, also caused the Incarnation.

How was the Son of God made man?—The Son of God was conceived and made man by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Three Persons of God cooperated in the Incarnation, but only the Second Person took on flesh: only He took to Himself a human nature.

1. The Incarnation is peculiarly the work of the *Blessed Trinity*. They formed a human soul and a human body, and these they united to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; the result was Our Lord Jesus Christ, God-Man.

To the power of the Holy Ghost we attribute the Incarnation, because the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity peculiarly expresses the Spirit of Love: and the Incarnation is the supreme example of God's love for men.

2. It was fitting that God the Son should become incarnate, rather than the Father or the Holy Ghost; for the Son *proceeds* from the Father, and could be sent by Him.

God the Son then could, as the fruit of His Redemption, send God the Holy Ghost. Thus through the Son of God we became adopted sons of God.

When was the Son of God conceived and made man?—The Son of God was conceived and made man on Annunciation Day, the day on which the Angel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to be the Mother of God.

1. In Nazareth of Galilee lived the Blessed Virgin Mary. One day the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and said: *"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women"* (Luke 1:28).

Mary was surprised. The angel said: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son: and thou shalt call His name Jesus." This event is called the *Annunciation*, commemorated by a feast on *March 25*.

2. Mary knew that the angel was sent by God. She answered: *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word"* (Luke 1:38).

At these words of the Blessed Virgin, Jesus Christ became man in her womb, and the Incarnation was accomplished.

3. The mystery of the Incarnation is commemorated daily by the *Angelus*, a prayer said by Catholics morning, noon, and night, at the ringing of the Angelus bell.

The Angelus bell is rung in a particular way: at the verse, it is sounded three times; a pause follows while the Hail Mary is recited. This procedure is repeated three times for the three verses and three Hail Marys. Then follows continual ringing while the Prayer is said.

During the Easter time the prayer *Regina Coeli* (Queen of Heaven) is substituted for the Angelus. Those who do not know these prayers by heart, or who cannot read, may say five Hail Marys instead.

Did Jesus Christ have human parents?—Jesus Christ had a human mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, but He had no human father.

1. The Blessed Virgin was Christ's mother *as man*, but not as God.

However, the Blessed Virgin is truly the *Mother of God*, because the humanity and divinity of her Son are inseparable. In a similar way we call our parents mother and father, although they only gave us our body, and not our soul.

2. Christ had *no human father*. The Blessed Virgin remained a virgin all her life. The conception of Our Lord is a great miracle and a mystery that we cannot understand. We can only accept it as true on the word of God, Who is almighty.

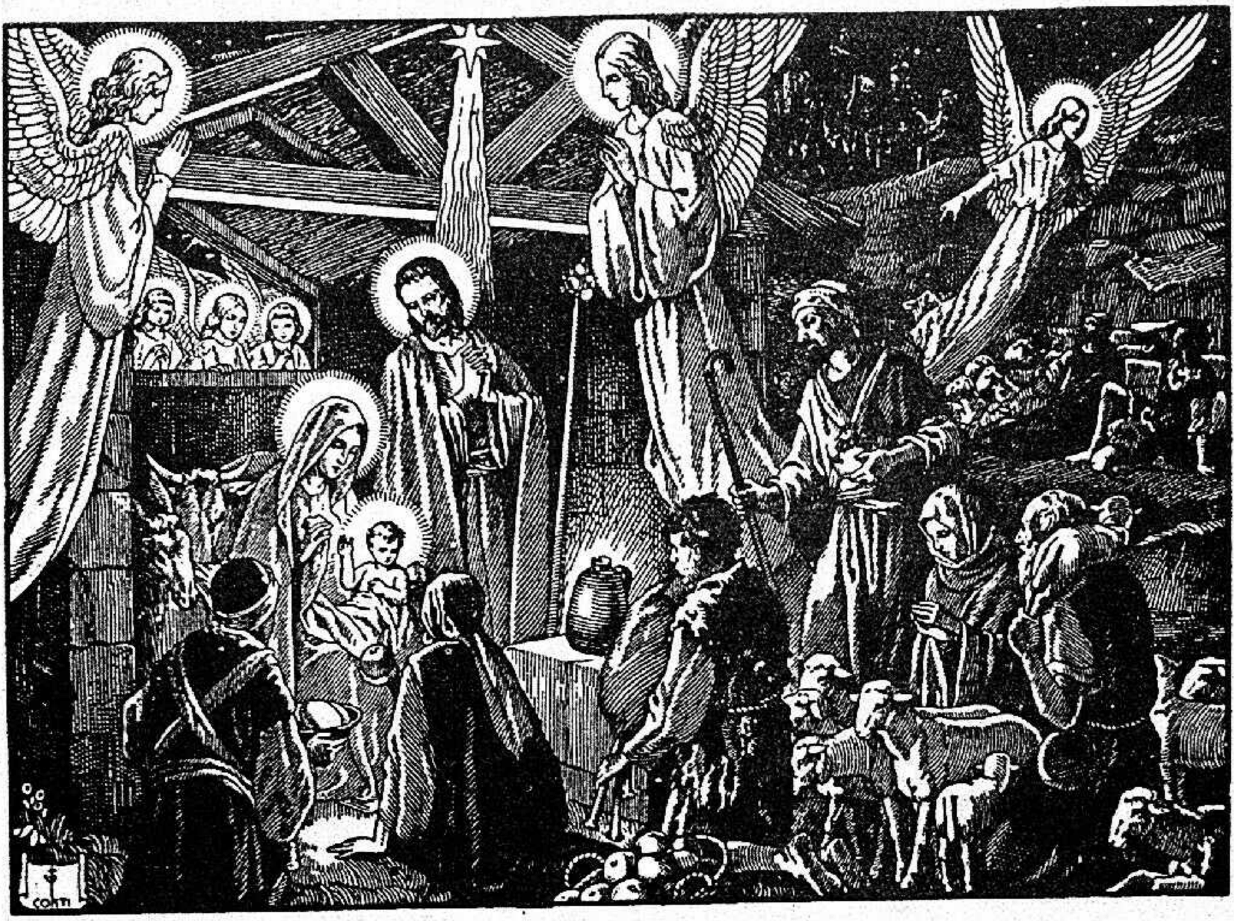
St. Joseph was the legal spouse of Mary, but both of them preserved their virginity, consecrating it to God. They always lived together as brother and sister. St. Joseph was only the guardian or foster-father of Our Lord.

3. We should honor and love ***Saint Joseph***, because Our Lord honored and loved him. Holy Scripture calls him a just man. He was a most *pure man;* and this is why God selected him as the virgin spouse of Mary, to care for her and the Child Jesus.

Jesus loved St. Joseph, and obeyed his slightest wish. Mary even called Joseph the father of Jesus.

4. It seems that Saint Joseph was born in Bethlehem of Judea. But at the time of the Annunciation, he and Mary were living in *Nazareth* of Galilee. He was a carpenter. It appears that he died before the beginning of Christ's public life.

The memory of Saint Joseph was venerated from the very earliest centuries. In 1870 Pope Pius IX declared Saint Joseph *Patron* of the Church. He is also patron of a *happy death*. We should invoke his protection often. His feast, kept on *March 19*, has been celebrated since the 15th century.



"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds in the same district living in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of God shone round about them, and they feared exceedingly. And the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be to all the people; for there has been born to you today in the town of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord'"

(Luke 2:7-11).

31. The Nativity

When was Christ born?—Christ was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Christmas Day, in Bethlehem, more than nineteen hundred years ago.

1. When Jesus Christ was born, the Jews were no longer independent. In 64 B. C. Pompey reduced their kingdom and subjected it to *Rome*.

Because the Jews were always plotting rebellion against Rome, the Jewish king was replaced by Herod, a Gentile, the first non-Jew to become king. Thus the scepter was "taken away from Juda", and the time predicted for the Messias had arrived.

2. Today we *reckon dates* from the birth of Christ. This has been the continuous custom since the time of Charlemagne, although many rulers from the 5th century had adopted the practice.

However, there is an error of some four to six years. Generally, it is supposed, as a matter of *historical fact*, that Christ was born 7-5 B.C. An error in the calculation of dates in later centuries produced this anomaly.

3. *Bethlehem* is a little town in Judea, near the city of Jerusalem. Joseph and Mary went there in obedience to the Emperor at Rome, who had commanded all his subjects to register in the towns of their ancestors.

Joseph and Mary were both descended from King David, whose city was Bethlehem; this is why they went to register there. They tried to find a place to stay in even for only a night, but could find refuge nowhere. And so they sought shelter in a poor stable; there Jesus was born.

4. Jesus was born in a stable, a poor place. He *preferred* poverty and humiliation in order to suffer more for us.

He wished to show Himself a friend of the poor, and to teach that the best way to heaven is through *humility*, and *detachment* from worldly goods.

5. The Church celebrates the Nativity on ***December 25.*** The feast is called ***Christmas.*** On this day every priest is granted the privilege of saying three Masses: one in commemoration of Christ's eternal birth from God the Father; another in remembrance of His temporal birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and a third to recall His spiritual birth in the hearts of the faithful.

The word "Christmas" comes from *Christ* and *Mass.* The feast is so called because on that day the Mass commemorating the birth of Christ is said.

6. An angel appeared to shepherds and told them of the Nativity. A *star* led three Magi (Wise Men) to Bethlehem.

The shepherds represented the *poor.* The Magi represented the *rich.* All offered their gifts to the Infant Jesus. Our Lord does not look at the price of our gifts, but at the purity of our hearts.

The Church commemorates the adoration of the Magi on the Feast of the Epiphany, ***January 6.*** "Epiphany" means *manifestation.* In the persons of the Magi, who were not Jews, Our Lord was manifested to all nations of the earth, who were at the time lost in paganism. With the Magi we are called to the Truth; the Old Testament was ended, and the world had entered upon a new Covenant with God. And if, like the Magi, we offer Jesus Christ the gold of our love, the myrrh of self-sacrifice, and the incense of our prayers, we too shall be united with God.

7. Many churches and homes set up a *crib* at Christmas. This custom, although of very ancient origin, was popularized by St. Francis of Assisi.

In the year 1223, he visited Pope Honorius III and sought approval of his plans to make a scenic representation of the Nativity. Having obtained the Pope's consent, Francis left Rome, and arrived at Greccio on Christmas Eve. There in the church he constructed a crib, grouping around it images of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, of the shepherds, the ox, and the ass. At the midnight Mass St. Francis acted as deacon. After singing the words of the Gospel, "And they laid Him in a manger", he knelt down to meditate on the great gift of the Incarnation. And people around saw in his arms a Child, surrounded by a most brilliant light.

Since then the devotion to the crib has spread far and wide. The crib remains in church until the octave day of the Epiphany. At the proper time the images of the Three Kings and their retinue are added, making a daily advance towards the crib.

Most homes also set up a decorated Christmas *tree.* It is a reminder of the tree of the cross. The *boxes* of Christmas gifts remind us of the great Gift that God sent us.

Santa Claus, the jolly and beloved distributor of Christmas gifts, is an American adoption of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, of the fourth century. This Saint is popular in Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, where he is made the secret purveyor of gifts to children on December 6, his feast day. The custom was brought to New York by the Dutch, quickly spread throughout the United States, and became absorbed into the Christmas celebration.

What incidents in Our Lord's life were closely connected with the Nativity?—The following incidents in Our Lord's life were closely connected with the Nativity: the Circumcision, the Presentation, and the flight to Egypt.

1. The Child received the name Jesus when He was eight days old. He was *circumcised,* according to the custom of the Jews. At the Circumcision Jesus began His role of Mediator between God and man, shedding His blood for the first time for us.

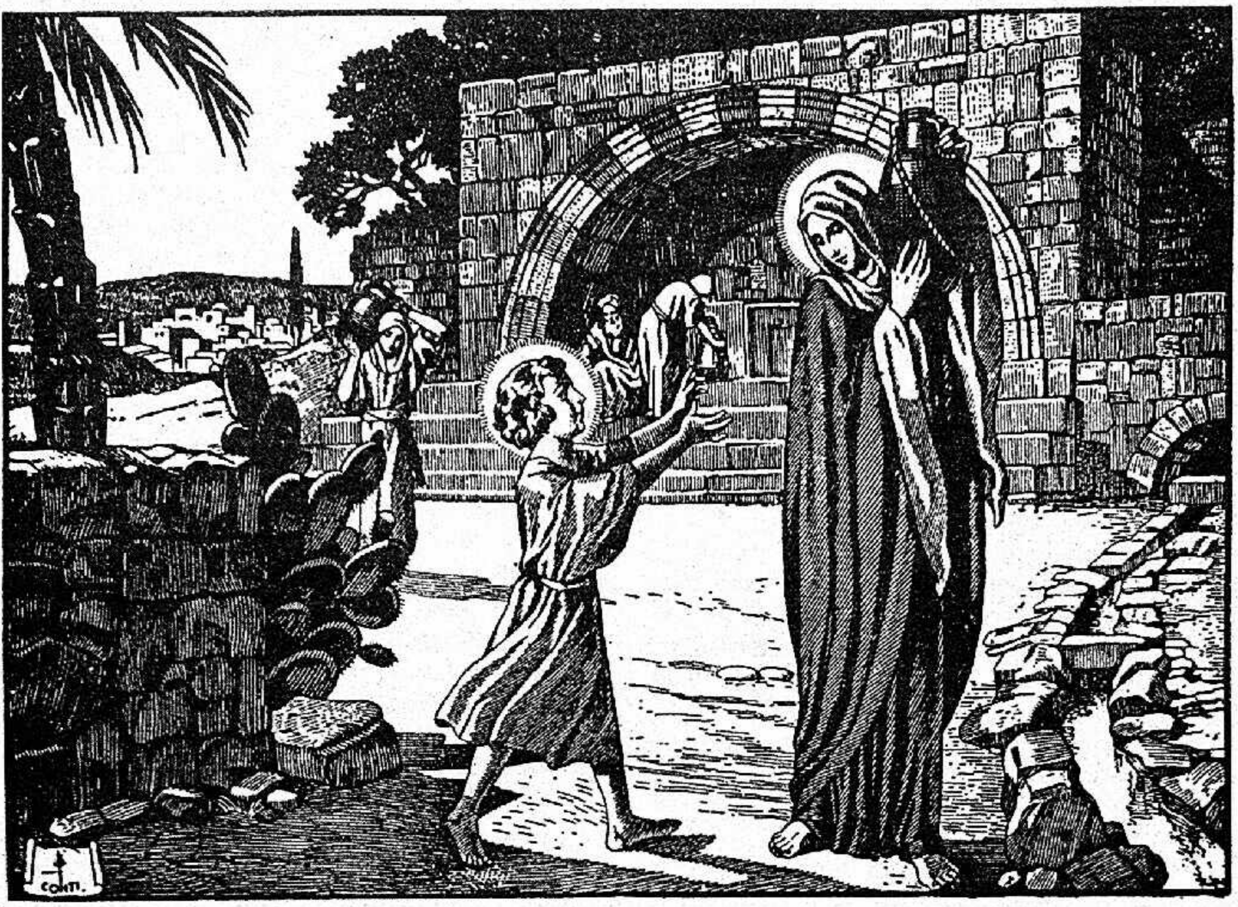
"Thou shalt call his name Jesus,' for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). "Therefore God . . . has bestowed upon him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. 2:9,10). "If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23). The feast of the Circumcision is celebrated on *New Year's Day.* Thus the Church teaches us to begin everything in the name of Jesus.

2. When Jesus was forty days old, His Mother *presented* Him in the Temple at Jerusalem. In imitation, though the rite is essentially different, mothers today after childbirth seek the blessing of the Church in a thanksgiving ceremony called "*churching*"

The feast of the Presentation is celebrated on *February 2.* It is also called the *Purification* of the Blessed Virgin, or Candlemas Day. On this day candles are blessed and carried in procession, in memory of the words of holy Simeon, when Jesus was presented in the Temple. He said Our Lord was "a Light of revelation to the Gentiles".

3. Mary and Joseph took the Child Jesus to *Egypt* to save Him from King Herod, who wanted to kill Him.

An angel appeared to Joseph and told him to take the Child Jesus and His mother away to Egypt. They stayed in Egypt until the death of King Herod. Then an angel appeared to Joseph and bade him return to the land of the Jews.



After the finding in the Temple, Jesus returned with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth. There He lived with them, doing all He could to help His Mother and St. Joseph in their work.

Jesus, God Himself, obeyed mortals, because He wanted to set us an example. He lived a life of obedience, humility, and poverty in Nazareth till He was about thirty years old. This hidden life teaches us, among other things, the value in the eyes of God, of prayer, humility and obedience.

32. The Hidden Life of Jesus Christ

How may the life of Jesus Christ be divided?—The life of Jesus Christ may be divided into three parts: His childhood, to the time when He was twelve years old; His hidden life, to the time when He started His teaching; and His public life, to the time of His death.

1. After the murder of the Holy Innocents, the Child Jesus lived in *Egypt* with His mother and St. Joseph until the death of Herod, then returned with them to the Holy Land.

An angel appeared to Joseph and said, "Arise, and take the Child and his Mother, and go into the land of Israel" (Matt. 2:20). Just as St. Joseph had obeyed without question when told to take the Child to Egypt, so now he obeyed, knowing that God Who watches over the birds of the air would watch over those given into his charge.

2. The Holy Family lived in *Nazareth*. From there, every year Mary and Joseph went to worship at the Temple of Jerusalem. When Jesus was twelve years old, He went along with His parents to celebrate the Pasch at Jerusalem. Then Mary and Joseph left the city to return to Nazareth, but Jesus remained behind without their knowledge.

"But thinking that he was in the caravan, they had come a day's journey before it occurred to them to look for him among their relatives and acquaintances. And not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem in search of him" (Luke 2:44-45). We can only imagine the distress of Mary and Joseph upon having lost Jesus, most precious to them, the Child that had been entrusted to their care. And what was their joy when after three days' search they found Him in the Temple, in the midst of the wise men there, hearing and questioning them! Mary told how great had been her grief when she said, "Behold, thy father and I have been seeking thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48). But Jesus replied, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

Jesus dearly loved Mary and Joseph, but He did not hesitate to cause them pain and part from them, in order *to obey* His heavenly Father's will. In imitation of Him, many young people leave home and their dear parents, to enter the priesthood or a religious congregation, to *serve* God completely.

3. Some non-Catholic interpreters insist that Jesus had *brothers*, that He was not the only Son of Mary. Those spoken of in the Gospels as the "brethren" of Our Lord (Matt. 13:55), were His blood relatives; it was the practice among the Jews to call near relatives "brethren".

So Abraham called his nephew Lot in this manner: "Let there be no quarrel between me and thee, . . . for we are brethren" (Gen. 13:8). As St. John Chrysostom wrote, Our Lord on the cross would not have needed to commend His Mother to his Apostle John, if she had had other children.

How long did the hidden life of Jesus Christ last? — The hidden life of Jesus Christ lasted from His return to Nazareth at the age of twelve until He entered into public life, at the age of thirty.

1. Of this part of Christ's life all we directly read from Holy Scripture are two statements: "And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men" (Luke 2:51, 52). In these two sentences is contained the history of *eighteen years* of the life of Jesus Christ, the God-Man.

In the Temple, at the early age of twelve, Jesus had proved His wisdom before the doctors of the law. As St. Luke writes, "And all who were listening to him were amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47). But did He continue after this unusual and favorable beginning; did He stay on to preach His doctrine? No; instead, He meekly followed His parents as a young child of that age, and went to live with them in obscurity in Nazareth.

2. The actions of Jesus Christ are intended for us as *examples* and instructions, as much as His words. As He said, "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do" (John 13:15). The hidden life of Jesus is for us a perfect model of *humility*. He lived in poverty and lowliness: the Mother He chose was a poor woman; His foster-father was a carpenter; the town in which He spent the greatest part of His life was an obscure place despised by the Jews: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46)

By His hidden life Jesus Christ teaches us to learn holiness and wisdom before we presume to teach others. He teaches us, by living in obscurity, to fight against our vanity, which makes us desire to be doing only what seems great and important, which makes us desire to be praised and noticed. By His hidden life Our Lord teaches us to subdue our pride, to live day after day without impatience or complaint, unknown to the world, and even despised, if that is the will of God for us; then we shall have true peace of heart. And so Jesus said, "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11:29). For long years of obscurity in Nazareth, He was just "a carpenter's son".

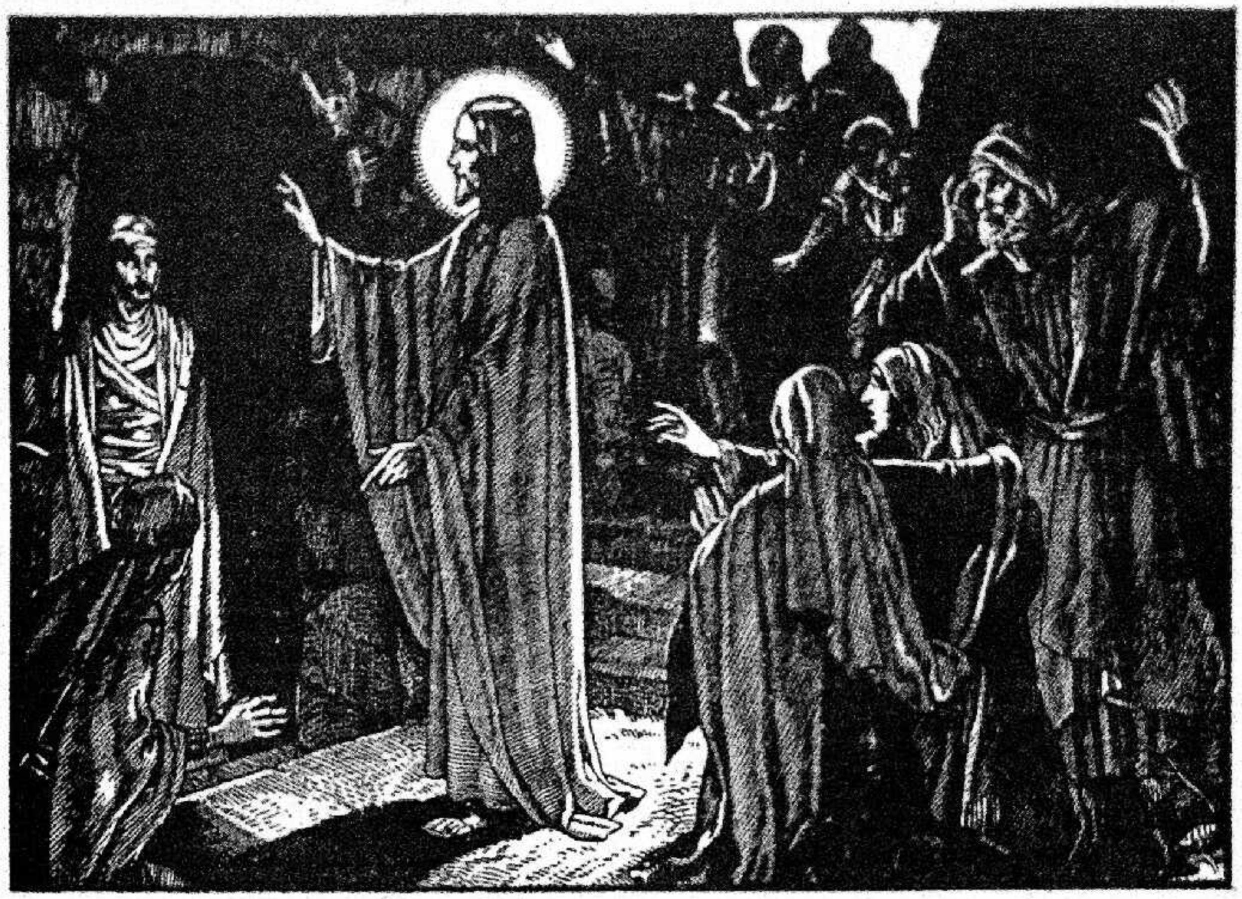
3. The hidden life of Jesus Christ is for us a perfect model of *obedience:* "And He was subject to them." The God of all created things, almighty and infinite, was subject to two poor and unknown mortals. He obeyed them in all things, promptly, constantly, cheerfully, and with great love.

Let us model our obedience on this perfect pattern. Let us obey our superiors as representatives of God, giving them due respect and prompt obedience. When our parents command us, and we go about doing what they want, but with murmuring and without spirit, is that the obedience that the Child Jesus gave in Nazareth? When we have to do some unpleasant or difficult task, let us imitate Jesus in His very words: "Yes, Father, for such was thy good pleasure" (Matt. 11:26).

In this way our obedience will be like that of Jesus, supernatural; we shall obey human beings for the love of God; we shall really be obeying God Himself, in the persons of those He has placed over us. By the example of His hidden life our Lord set the principle for the religious life, particularly for that in *contemplative* orders.

4. Jesus "advanced in wisdom and grace before God and men." Although He possesed all wisdom and grace from the first moment of His mortal life, He manifested them only *gradually* and in a way that was in keeping with His years.

We can obtain much merit before God without doing any striking actions, by merely being humble and obedient in the place of life in which it has pleased God to put us. If Christ the Son of God, God Himself, was content to be humble, poor, and unknown, to do common tasks day by day for the greater part of His earthly life, is there any reason why we should be ever trying to exalt ourselves, to attract admiration, ever to feed our vanity?



Our Lord spent the three years of His public life teaching, healing the sick, working miracles to prove His mission and Divinity. One of His most wonderful miracles was the raising of Lazarus.

Lazarus had been dead and buried four days. But Jesus went to the sepulchre and ordered the stone closing it to be taken away. Then He cried: "Lazarus, come forth!" And Lazarus came forth from the grave. Because of this miracle, the Pharisees became more envious, and even planned to kill Lazarus, so as to make it appear that Jesus had not raised him from the dead.

33. The Public Life of Jesus Christ

When did Christ begin His public life?—Christ began His public life when He was about thirty years old.

1. After spending long years in obscurity and humble toil, Jesus Christ next entered upon a period of activity, going about and teaching publicly. He left His home in Nazareth, and began His public life by an act of great humility: His *baptism* at the hands of St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan.

The mother of St. John the Baptist was St. Elizabeth, cousin of the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. John lived a life of very rigorous penance in the desert, preparing himself for his role of forerunner or precursor of the Saviour. About two years before Christ started His public life, John the Baptist went out of the desert, and began to preach penance; he baptized in the Jordan all those who believed in his teachings and wished to begin a new life.

St. John the Baptist was the *forerunner* or *precursor* of Christ. He spoke to the people of the coming Messias, and pointed Jesus out to them as the "Lamb of God." He was put to death by Herod, because he reproved the ruler for his immoral life.

Jesus came to John to be baptized; immediately afterwards, as Our Lord came out of the river, the Holy Ghost came down upon Him in the form of a dove, and a Voice from heaven was heard saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

2. After His baptism, Jesus went into the desert, where He *fasted* forty days and forty nights. This teaches us to look upon baptism as a call to penance, and to prepare for all kinds of activity by mortification and prayer.

The forty days of Lent are intended to commemorate the forty days fasting of Our Lord. Lent lasts from Ash Wednesday till the noon of Holy Saturday.

3. After Our Lord's long fast, the devil was permitted to *tempt* Him. Christ rebuked the devil, and angels came to minister to Him.

From this temptation of Our Lord we know that a temptation is not sinful. As long as we resist the devil, we are pleasing to God, however strong may be the temptation that assails us. "God is faithful and will not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also give you a way out that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

How long did Christ's public life last?—Christ's public life lasted about three years, during which He went about preaching, teaching, and doing good.

1. Upon His return from His forty-day fast in the desert, Jesus called His *first disciples*. In a few days He performed His first miracle, changing water into wine at a marriage-feast in Cana, at the request of His Mother, although, as He told her, His time had not yet come.

Among the outstanding works of Jesus during the first year of His active life were: He drove sellers out of the Temple, saying they made it a "den of thieves". He cured the ruler's son, Peter's mother-in-law, the paralytic at the pool, the daughter of Jairus. He calmed the tempest.

2. Jesus began the second year of His public life by an act of utmost significance: He chose from the many that followed Him, "the Twelve", His twelve *Apostles*, Himself calling them Apostles. In the Sermon on the Mount He summarized His teachings; it is the law of love taking the place of the law of fear.

During the second year of His mission, Christ performed many miracles, among which were: the cure of the centurion's servant, of the widow's son at Naim; the first multiplication of the loaves; He walked on the water, and bade Peter walk on it, too. He forgave Mary Magdalen, and sent the Apostles on their mission. He began teaching in the form of parables, comparing what He wanted to teach with common things. Among His parables of this period were: the sower, the tares and wheat, the mustard seed, the pearl of great price.

3. In His *third* year of teaching, Jesus went to Galilee and Phoenicia, because in Judea where He had been teaching, the Pharisees for envy and jealousy sought to kill Him. In Phoenicia He gave in to the entreaties of a Gentile, a Canaanite, who persevered in asking Him to cure her daughter.

In Galilee Jesus cured a deaf-and-dumb man, using signs that the Church has adopted in its baptismal ceremonies; he performed the miracle of the second multiplication of the loaves. On Mount Thabor He was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John. Among other cures were those of the ten lepers, and the man blind from birth. He promised the primacy over all to Peter, paid the tribute to Caesar, forgave the woman caught in adultery, sent out his seventy-two disciples on a mission, called the rich young man, instructed Mary and Martha, and was the guest of Zacheus. He told the parables of the unmerciful servant, the Good Samaritan, the lost sheep, the lost groat, the greater supper, the unjust steward, the prodigal son, Dives and Lazarus, the Pharisee and the publican, the laborers in the vineyard.

4. Finally, at the end of His public life, Jesus *raised Lazarus* from the dead. By this time the envy of the Pharisees was so great that they determined to bring about the death of Jesus; Judas came as a ready tool.

Magdalen anointed Our Lord, as He said, for His burial. He entered Jerusalem in triumph riding on an ass, with children waving palms and singing. He told the parable of the husbandmen and the heir, to show the Pharisees that He knew of their designs against Him. And last of all, He ate the Last Supper with His Apostles, there instituting the Holy Eucharist.

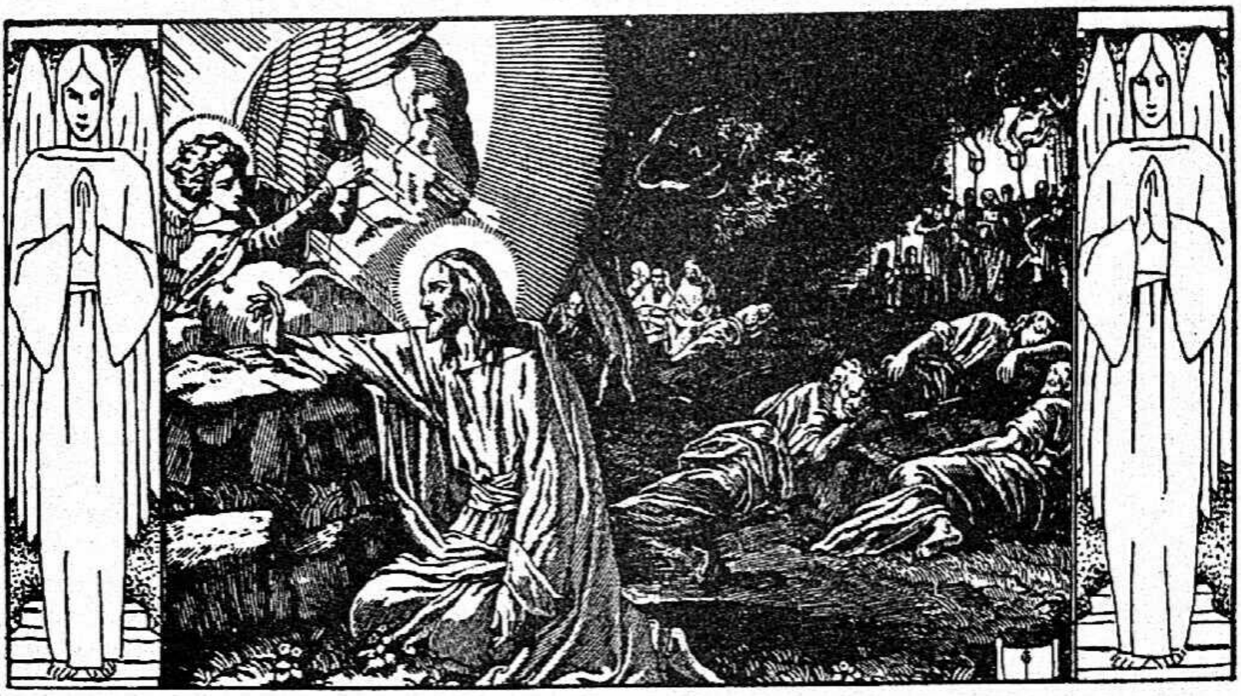
What was Christ's aim in His public life?—Christ's aim in His public life was to teach what God requires all to believe and practice, so that all may enter the kingdom of heaven.

1. For this purpose He gathered some seventy-two *disciples*, and from them chose twelve Apostles, to whom He gave special instruction and training. By them He established His Church, which was to carry on His work after His death, to continue teaching what He had openly and publicly taught.

He spoke to large crowds, sometimes numbering four or five thousand people, as when He multiplied the loaves and fishes. Christ taught in the simplest manner, so that all might understand without difficulty. He used plain, homely words. He often used signs and parables, and illustrated His meaning by examples from nature and common life.

2. In the *doctrines* He taught, a leading idea is: "Seek first the kingdom of God."

He taught a new rule of faith, and gave new commandments. He taught the precept of love, even for our enemies. He revealed certain mysteries: such as those of the Blessed Trinity, of His own divinity, of the Last Judgment. He instituted the seven sacraments.



After the Last Supper, Jesus went with His Apostles to the Garden of Gethsemani. And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying: "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou willest" (Matt. 26:39).

After praying three times the same prayer, Jesus said to His disciples: "Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go. Behold, he who betrays Me is at hand" (Matt. 26:45-46). Judas had come.

34. The Passion

(Fourth Article of the Apostles' Creed)

What important events marked the end of Our Lord's public life?—The following events marked the end of Our Lord's public life: His solemn entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper He ate with His Apostles, and finally, His passion and death.

1. Jesus Christ entered *Jerusalem* in triumph, riding on an ass, with children waving palms and singing.

The Church commemorates the entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. On that day palms are blessed, and there is a procession, in memory of the palms that the joyous people waved at the entrance into Jerusalem of Our Lord. Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter. The week following it is called *Holy Week*.

2. On the Thursday evening after His entry into Jerusalem, Jesus ate the Paschal *Supper* with His Apostles. We call it the Last Supper, for it was the last meal He ate before His death.

The Jews celebrated the feast of the Pasch in memory of their deliverance from Egypt. They had been saved by the blood of the paschal lamb.

3. After the Supper, Our Lord *washed the feet* of the Apostles. He did this to teach us humility.

In memory, on Holy Thursday the Pope washes the feet of twelve priests. In many countries parish priests wash the feet of twelve poor men.

4. After the washing of feet, Our Lord ***instituted the Blessed Eucharist,*** said the first Mass, and gave His Apostles their *first Holy Communion.*

What is meant by the Redemption?—By the Redemption is meant that Jesus Christ, as Redeemer of the whole human race, offered His sufferings and death to God as a fitting sacrifice in satisfaction for the sins of men, and regained for them the right to be children of God and heirs of heaven.

A *redeemer* is one who pays in order to get back something lost. He gives satisfaction, compensation for an offense or injury done another.

1. No creature could, of himself, make *satisfaction* for sin. Sin offends an infinite God, and therefore would need infinite sat-

isfaction. Therefore Someone Infinite, Jesus Christ, had to offer that satisfaction.

Jesus Christ suffered and died as man; as God He could neither suffer nor die. He suffered excruciatingly in order to make full reparation for sin, and to impress on us the great evil of sin. Even only one sin is so abominable to God that not all the deluges and fires can wipe off the stain. Only the blood of God Himself can do so. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6).

2. Christ died for ***all men,*** without exception. He is the Redeemer of all men. Not all men are saved because *not all accept* the graces which Christ merited for us by His death. Many do not believe in Him. Of those who believe, many lead sinful lives.

"Christ also loved us and delivered himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God" (Eph. 5:2). We can never realize fully that God died for us. We can never repay Him in this life or the next. The only way we can show our appreciation is to *live according to His will.*

What were the chief sufferings of Christ?—The chief sufferings of Christ were His bitter agony of soul, His bloody sweat, His cruel scourging, His crowning with thorns, His crucifixion, and His death on the cross.

Christ had often foretold His Passion. "For he was teaching his disciples, and saying to them, 'The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and having been killed, he will rise again on the third day'" (Mark 9:30). Again: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the Scribes; and they will condemn him to death, and will deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and put him to death; and on the third day he will rise again" (Mark 10:33-34).

1. From the Last Supper, Christ went with His Apostles to the *Garden of Olives* to pray. There He was overwhelmed with sorrow and agony, so that He sweated blood.

Our Lord looked forward to His agony, saying to His Apostles, "That the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do as the Father has commanded me. Arise, let us go from here" (John 14:31). In the Garden, Jesus felt so sad at the sins of men and at what would befall Him that He said, "My soul is sad even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). To His Father, He cried out in pain, "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; yet not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). In agony, "his sweat became as drops of blood, running down upon the ground" (Luke 22:44).

2. Jesus Christ was *betrayed* by Judas, seized by soldiers, led before the high priest, and condemned to death. The Sanhedrin, the council of the Jews, headed by Caiphas the high-priest, condemned Jesus to death for the crime of blasphemy, because *He claimed to be Christ* the Son of God.

"Then the high priest, standing up, said to him, 'Dost thou make no answer to the things that these men prefer against thee?' But Jesus kept silence. And the high priest said to him, 'I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'Thou hast said it.' . . . Then the high priest tore his garment, saying, 'He has blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?' And they answered and said, 'He is liable to death'" (Matt. 26:62-66)

3. Jesus Christ was led to *Pontius Pilate,* the Roman Governor of Judea, to have His sentence confirmed. At the time the Jews were forbidden by their Roman masters from putting anyone to death without the confirmation of the Governor. Pilate questioned Christ time and again, but had to say to His accusers: "I find no guilt in Him."

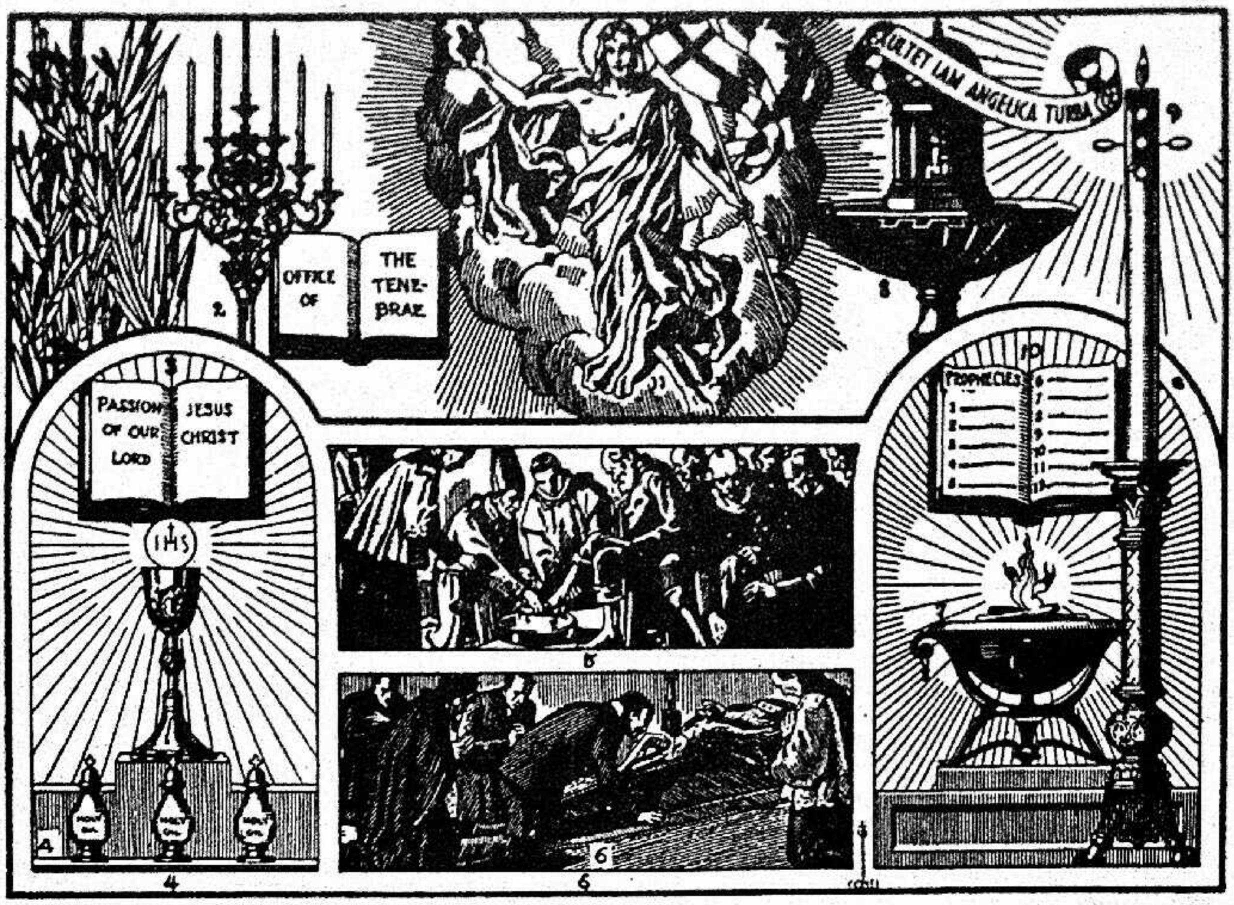
The Jewish Priests and Pharisees hated and persecuted Jesus because they expected the Messias to be an earthly king. They were so wicked that in spite of the proofs of Christ's divinity, they would not believe a poor man could be the Messias. They hated Jesus; He had rebuked them for their sins.

4. But Pilate wished to please the Jews, and had Jesus scourged. Jesus was bound to a pillar, His clothes torn off; strong men with whips, cords, and straps with iron spikes scourged Him, and the whole body of Our Lord was one great wound.

"And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon his head, and arrayed him in a purple cloak. And they kept coming to him and saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him. Pilate therefore again went outside and said to them, 'Behold, I bring him out to you, that you may know that I find no guilt in him.' Jesus therefore came forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them, 'Behold the man!'"

5. At last, fearing that if he did not permit Jesus to be put to death the Jews would accuse him before Caesar, Pilate gave in to the insistence of the Jews and delivered Him to them to be *crucified.*

Christ was made to carry His cross through the streets of Jerusalem to Mount Calvary. He was nailed to the cross about noon, dying three hours afterwards, crucified between two thieves.



During Holy Week the Church lives again the passion and death of Christ. On the first day of that week, Palm Sunday, the solemn entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is celebrated by the blessing of palms (1). At the High Mass on this day and on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, the story of the Passion taken from each Evangelist is read (3).

On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoon of Holy Week, the Tenebrae are celebrated, when the fifteen candles are one by one extinguished, to show the flight of the disciples, and the death of Our Lord (2). On Holy Thursday, the bishop consecrates the holy oils (4), and washes the feet of twelve poor men, in memory of the washing by Our Lord of the feet of the Apostles (5).

On Good Friday, the crucifix is unveiled, laid on the ground, and adored by the people (6). On Holy Saturday, fire is struck from a flint, and blessed outside the church doors (7). From this fire the Paschal candle (9) and the sanctuary lamp are lit, to remind us that Christ is the Light of the world, from Whom all lights and graces come. Five grains of incense are imbedded in the paschal candle to remind us of the wounds of Christ. The baptismal font (8) is also blessed on Holy Saturday; and finally the recitation of the 12 prophecies (10) takes place before High Mass.

The picture (11) shows what is commemorated on Easter Sunday: the Resurrection of Our Lord, glorious and immortal.

35. Calvary

When did Christ die?—Christ died on Good Friday.

During the three hours that Christ suffered on the cross, He spoke seven times. We call these the *seven words:*

1. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
2. "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise."
3. "Woman, behold thy son. . . . Behold thy mother."
4. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
5. "I thirst."
6. "It is consummated."
7. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Where did Christ die?—Christ died on

Golgotha, a place outside the city of Jerusalem.

Christ was crucified on a hill called Calvary, outside the city of Jerusalem.

St. Augustine says that on the cross Our Lord bent His head to kiss us, extended His arms to embrace us, and opened His heart to love us. How thankful we should be to Christ for His love! "He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8).

What took place at the death of Christ?—At the death of Christ the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the veil of the Temple was rent, the rocks split, and many of the dead arose and appeared in Jerusalem.

1. The tearing of the veil of the Temple at the death of Christ marked the *end* of the Jewish religion as the true religion. This Jewish religion had been a figure of the True Church, and when the Church was established, was no longer needed: types and figures had to give way to *reality*.

The veil of the Temple concealed the Holy of Holies, the most sacred part of the Temple.

2. We must not, however, make the mistake of thinking that Christianity ended the moral laws—laws regarding good and evil—that were taught by the Jewish religion. Christ came not to destroy, but to *perfect*, the Old Law.

The authority of the Temple and its officers was now placed in the Church established by Christ, in the hands of His Apostles. The ceremonial laws of the Jews relating to worship were abolished.

3. The Church commemorates the death of Christ on ***Good Friday.*** On that day the whole Church is in mourning. No Mass is said, no Communion given to the faithful.

The altar is stripped, the lights are put out, and the bells silenced. The crucifix is unveiled, and priests and faithful adore the cross.

4. After His death, Our Lord's body was taken down from the cross and *laid in the grave* which belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. Then His disciples rolled up a great stone to close the tomb.

The chief priests and the Pharisees went in a body to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we have remembered how that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Give orders, therefore, that the sepulchre be guarded until the third day, or else his disciples may come and steal him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead'; and the last imposture will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go, guard it as well as you know how.' So they went and made the sepulchre secure, sealing the stone, and setting the guard (Matt. 27:63-66).

What do we learn from the sufferings and death of Christ?—From the sufferings and death of Christ we learn God's love for man and the evil of sin, for which God, who is all-just, demands such great satisfaction.

1. It was not *necessary* for Jesus to suffer so intensely in order to redeem all men. As His merits are infinite, He could have wiped away the sins of a thousand worlds by shedding one drop of His blood. But He chose to suffer agonies because He *loves* us.

"Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep . . . I am the good shepherd; and I know mine and mine know me. . . . and I lay down my life for my sheep" (John 10:11-15).

2. From the Passion of Christ we learn the *evil that sin is,* and the hatred that God bears it. We learn the necessity of satisfying for the malice and wickedness that is sin. Sin must be a horrible thing, to make Jesus Christ the God-man suffer so much.

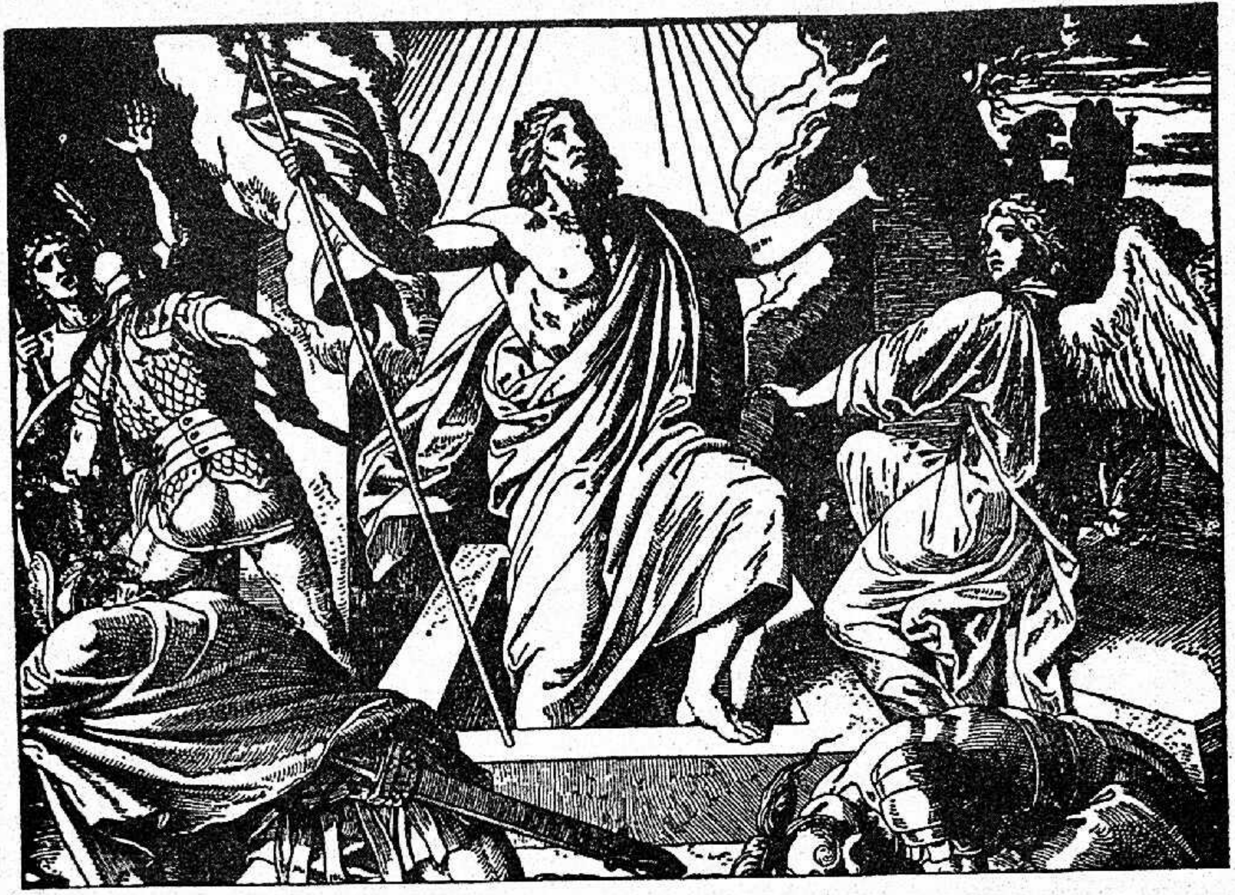
By Christ's obedience He atoned for Adam's disobedience, for He was obedient unto death. "He was wounded for our iniquities; he was bruised for our sins" (Is. 53:5).

3. The sufferings of Christ, in addition, serve as an *example* for us, to strengthen us under trials.

Christ gave us an example of patience and strength. If we receive trials, we should accept them with resignation, in imitation of Our Lord, Who suffered so willingly for our sake. We can never have as much suffering as He did.

Churches are built in the form of a cross because within the sacrifice of the cross is reenacted. Within them we remember easily the events that took place that day long ago, when Jesus Christ, Son of God, for love of us suffered and died on the Cross.

Church spires lead us to "seek those things that are above" (Col. 3:1); they are surmounted by a cross, the symbol of our salvation; their bells call us to prayer, communion with God. The church interior is divided into three parts: the porch, where in former times those preparing for baptism and the penitents knelt; the nave, which is the central and main portion, for those attending the Holy Sacrifice; and the choir or sanctuary, where in former times the singers stayed, now reserved for the clergy, and separated from the nave by the communion rail.



"Now late in the night of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and drawing near rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment like snow. And for fear of him the guards were terrified, and became like dead men. But the angel spoke and said to the women, Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen even as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord was laid' " (Matt. 28:1-7).

36. The Resurrection

(Fifth Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

What do we mean when we say in the Apostles' Creed that Christ descended into hell?—When we say that Christ descended into hell, we mean that, after He died, the soul of Christ descended into a place or state of rest, called limbo, where the souls of the just were waiting for Him.

1. Christ did not go to the hell of the damned, but to the "hell" *of the just*. In Holy Scripture, it was called "Abraham's bosom". St. Peter called it "a prison". We call it *limbo*.

Among the souls in limbo were Adam, Eve, Abel, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Isaias, Daniel, Job, Tobias, St. Joseph, and St. John the Baptist. They went to heaven at Our Lord's entrance upon His Ascension.

2. Christ went to limbo to announce to the souls waiting there the joyful news that He had reopened heaven to mankind.

"He was brought to life in the spirit, in which also he went and preached to those spirits that were in prison" (1 Pet. 3:19). The souls in limbo could not go to heaven, which had been closed by Adam's sin. It was only *reopened* to man by the death of Our Lord, by the Redemption. The souls in limbo *did not suffer* pain, but they longed for heaven. After the release of these souls from Limbo, and their entrance into heaven, this Limbo for the just souls ceased to exist.

3. While His soul was in limbo, Christ's body was in the holy sepulchre. When man dies, his soul is *separated* from the body. When Jesus died, His body and soul were

separated, but His divinity remained united to both body and soul.

Christ's body did not corrupt in the tomb. It was in the holy sepulchre from Friday evening when He was buried, to Sunday morning, when He arose from the grave. This is why we say Christ rose on the third day, although He was in the grave for only three incomplete days.

When did Christ rise from the dead?—Christ rose from the dead, glorious and immortal, on Easter Sunday, the third day after His death.

1. Christ had often *foretold* His resurrection.

He said of His own body: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). Before entering Jerusalem He said to His Apostles that He would be put to death and "rise again on the third day" (Matt. 20:19). On the night of the Last Supper He said: "But after I have risen, I will go before you into Galilee" (Matt. 26:32).

2. Even *His enemies knew* that He had predicted His resurrection. This is why they obtained Pilate's permission to seal the sepulchre and set guards to watch it.

They said to Pilate: "Sir, we have remembered how that deceiver said, while he was yet alive. '*After three days I will rise again*'" (Matt. 27:63).

3. Today the entire Christendom celebrates *Easter Sunday* in memory of the Resurrection. It is the Feast of feasts, commemorating the completion of our redemption by Christ.

Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring; the feast therefore is moveable, and can fall between March 22 and April 25. The Paschal season lasts till Trinity Sunday; till then the joyous *alleluia* resounds.

Why did Christ remain on earth forty days after His Resurrection?—Christ remained on earth forty days after His Resurrection to prove that He had truly risen from the dead, and to complete the instruction of the Apostles.

1. Christ's resurrection is an ***undoubted fact*** on which rests the Christian faith.

St. Paul says: "*If Christ has not risen, vain then is our preaching, vain too is your faith*" (1 Cor. 15:14). And according to St. John, an eyewitness: "Many other signs also Jesus worked in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:30-31).

2. In the first place, Christ *really died*. His death was witnessed by many, both friends and enemies. It was proved by the soldier who plunged his spear into His side. It was communicated officially to Pilate. His bones were not broken, because He was found already dead. His Mother and disciples would never have buried Him had they suspected the least chance of life.

Some unbelievers urge that Christ was dead only in appearance and after an interval recovered from His swoon and left the grave. The loss of blood following the scourging alone would have been enough to *cause death*, not to mention the wounds He received on the cross.

3. In the second place, Christ *really came to life*. On the first Easter morning He appeared to Mary Magdalen and the other women who sought Him at the sepulchre. Then He appeared to Peter. In the evening He walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. At night He appeared to the assembled Apostles.

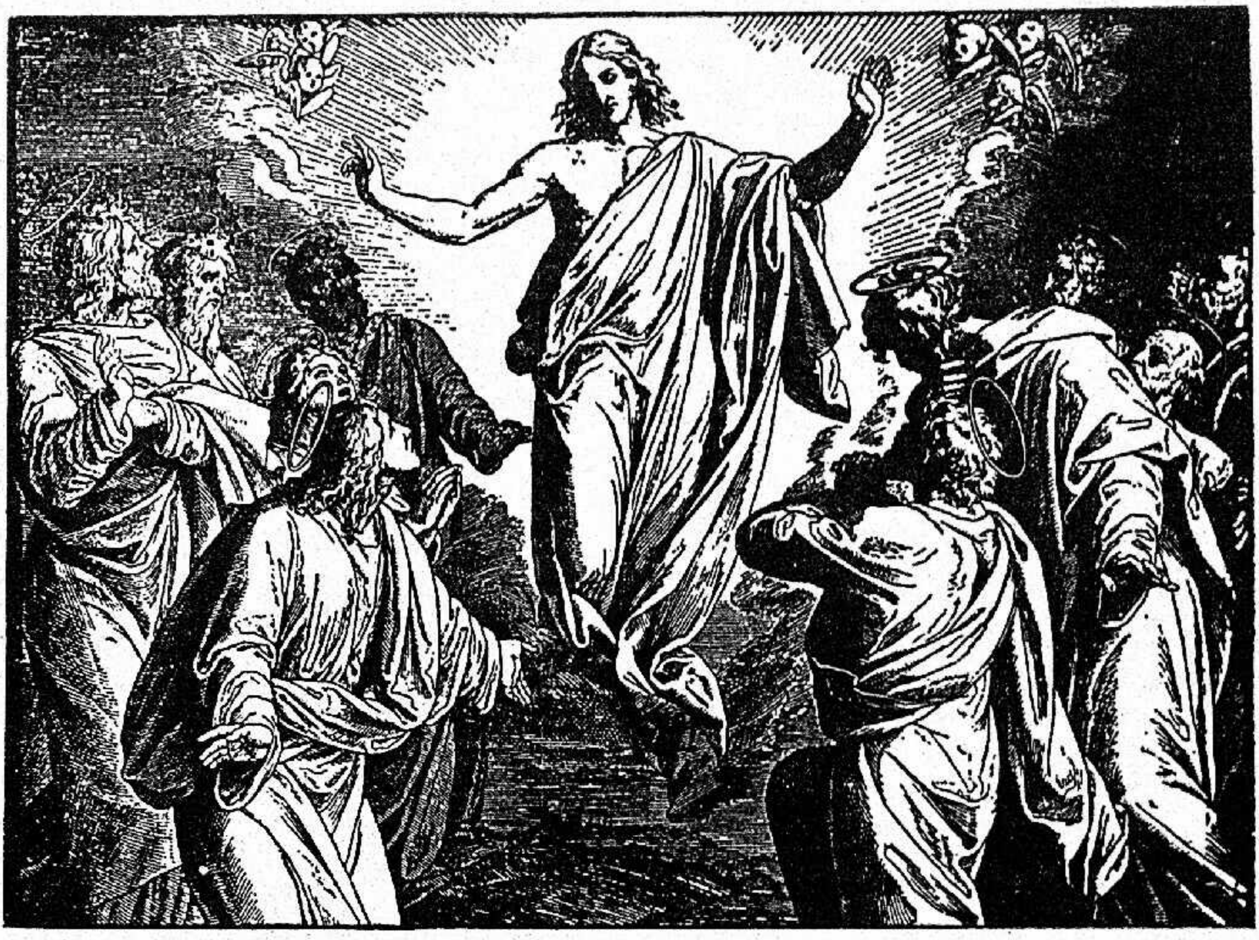
Nor were these witnesses easily deceived. The Apostles did not at first believe the women who told them the Lord had risen. They *would not even believe* their own senses, thinking the risen Saviour was a ghost. Christ had to call for something to eat, to prove that He was not a ghost. St. Thomas refused to believe the other ten Apostles, who had seen Christ first. He only believed when Our Lord appeared to him and bade him touch His wounds.

4. The Jews *bribed* the guards to say that while they were asleep, the disciples had stolen the body of Christ.

Such an act was made impossible by Christ's enemies themselves. They had *sealed and guarded* the tomb. "So they went and made the sepulchre secure, sealing the stone, and setting the guard" (Matt. 27:66). Even supposing the guards to have fallen asleep, the great stone which covered the sepulchre could not have been moved without waking some at least of the guards. Finally, it is a remarkable circumstance that the guards were *not punished* for this breach of duty.

5. Christ *really arose* from the dead. For forty days He appeared to many. He conversed, walked, and even ate with them. He spent much time instructing the Apostles.

One of His most important appearances was to *five hundred* disciples on a mountain in Galilee, when He gave the Apostles the command to go forth into the world and teach. The Evangelists have recorded nine apparitions; but it is evident from their writings (for example, Acts 1:3) that there were other and unrecorded occasions when Christ appeared. Countless of Christ's followers *laid down their lives* in testimony of the truth of the resurrection. "During forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).



On Mount Olivet, a hill outside Jerusalem, forty days after His Resurrection, Our Lord spoke to the disciples, telling them how the Holy Ghost would descend upon them. "And when He had said this, he was lifted up before their eyes, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing up to heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white garments, and said to them, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up to heaven? This Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have seen him going up to heaven'" (Acts 1:9-11).

37. The Ascension

(Sixth Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

Why did Christ rise from the dead?— —Christ rose from the dead to show that He is true God, and to teach us that we, too, shall rise from the dead.

1. The Resurrection is the most important of Christ's miracles. He Himself chose it as the most conclusive *proof* of His divine mission; the Apostles appealed to it to confirm their teachings. The fact of the Resurrection, by itself alone, proves Christ God.

Christ said repeatedly that He is the Son of God; He said He would rise again from the grave. He did rise, unaided, by His own almighty power; therefore He is as He said, the Son of God. If He were an impostor, God would not have permitted Him to rise again. "But take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

2. Christ bore on His body the marks of the five *wounds*. The qualities of His risen body were:

(a) *Agility*. It could go with the quickness of thought to all places.

(b) *Subtility* or spirituality. It was free from hunger, thirst, fatigue, and other needs. It could penetrate material substances.

(c) *Clarity* or brightness. It shone with splendor.

(d) *Impassibility*. It was immune to pain, disease, and death.

3. We are fortunate in having today for veneration a number of *relics* of the Passion.

The tablet with the inscription "I.N.R.I." is in the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Rome. One nail is said to have been thrown by St. Helena into the Adriatic to calm a storm; another is in the iron crown of the Lombards. Veronica's towel is in Rome. Part of the pillar of the scourging is at Rome, part in Jerusalem. The winding sheets are in Turin, and in Cadonin, France. Of the crown of thorns, part is in Paris, part in Toulouse. All these remind us of the time when "they entreated Him to let them touch but the tassel of His cloak" (Matt. 14:36).

Will all men rise from the dead?—All men will rise from the dead, but only those who have been faithful to Christ will share in His glory.

1. Like Christ, we, too, shall rise from the dead on the *Last Day*, and our bodies will be reunited with our souls.

"He who raised up Jesus will raise us up also with Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:14). "As Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

2. Those who have been faithful to Christ will be *rewarded* with the glory of heaven; those that have been unfaithful will be *punished* in the depths of hell.

"If you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, . . . not the things that are on earth." The rewards are given only to the faithful.

When did Christ ascend into heaven?—Christ ascended, body and soul, into heaven on Ascension day, forty days after His Resurrection.

1. The Ascension took place from the Mount of Olives. Christ's Apostles and disciples were present. It was *full daylight.*

He gave His followers His last instructions. Then He raised His hands and blessed them. He told them to preach the Gospel to all nations, and promised to be with them to the end of the world.

2. While all looked on, He was *raised up,* by *His own power,* and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

"Now he led them out towards Bethany, and . . . was carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-51).

3. The disciples *returned* to Jerusalem with great joy. Their Master had returned to heaven in glory, and His arrival there had opened to His followers the heavenly gates.

He had earned for men infinite grace, so that they were now able to attain the friendship of God Himself. Christ the King had gone home to prepare a place for men in heaven (John 14:16; 2 Cor. 1:7). We celebrate the feast of the Ascension forty days after Easter, on *Ascension Thursday.*

What do we mean when we say that Christ sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty? — When we say that Christ sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, we mean that Our Lord as God is equal to the Father, and that as man He shares above all the saints in the glory of His Father, and exercises for all eternity the supreme authority of a King over all creatures.

1. Christ as God is *equal* to the Father in all things. But even as man Christ is only next to God. Of Himself, Christ has dominion over all creation, his authority resting on the union of His divine and human natures in the Person of the Son of God.

He is *above* all the angels and saints. To sit at the right hand of anybody is a mark of honor from that person. "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. 109:1, 2).

2. Christ ascended into heaven in order:

(a) To enter into the *glory* He had merited.
(b) To send down the *Holy Ghost* on His Church.
(c) To be our *intercessor* with the Father.
(d) To *prepare* a place for us in heaven.

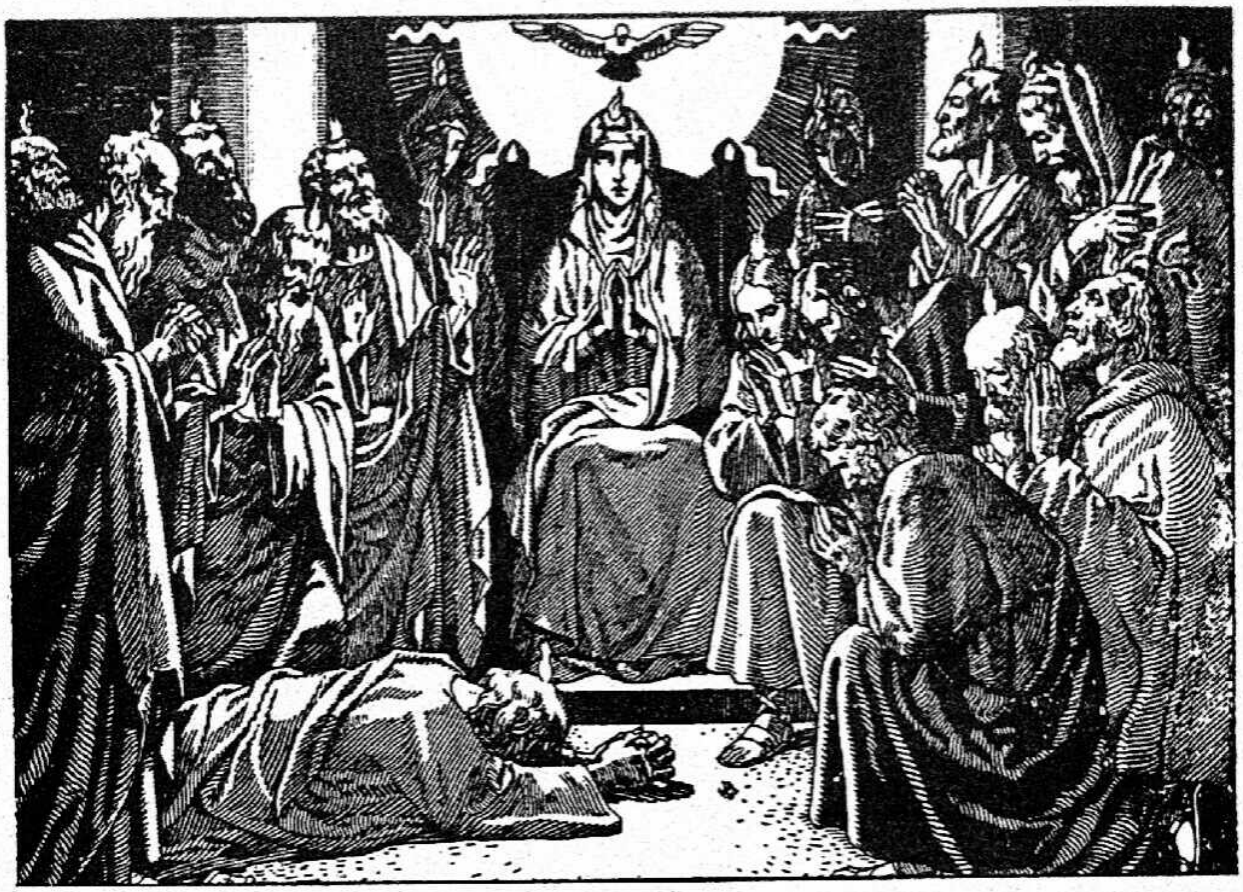
What do we mean when we say that Christ will come from thence to judge the living and the dead?—When we say that Christ will come from thence to judge the living and the dead, we mean that on the last day Our Lord will come to pronounce a sentence of eternal reward or of eternal punishment on every one who has ever lived in this world. (*Seventh Article of the Apostles' Creed: see General Judgment, pages* 162-163).

1. Jesus Christ will be our Supreme Judge because He is "king of kings and Lord of lords" (Apoc. 17:14).

"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father and then he will render to everyone according to his conduct" (Matt. 16:27).

2. Christ's teaching has *changed the face of the earth.* One poor young man, teaching for three years in the hills and valleys of Galilee, and dying a shameful death, has brought light, love, peace, and hope into men's lives, even the lowliest.

Before Christ the world was the abode of sin and vice, idolatry, polygamy, divorce, and slavery. However, the world today, although reformed by Christianity, is far from perfect. This is because many refuse to obey the teachings of Christ. It is our duty to make Christ *better known and loved,* so that all may *"seek first the kingdom of God."*



"And when the days of Pentecost were drawing to a close, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, which settled upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues, even as the Holy Spirit prompted them to speak" (Acts 2:1-4).

38. The Holy Ghost

(Eighth Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

Who is the Holy Ghost?—The Holy Ghost is God and the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

1. Christ often spoke of the Holy Ghost.

One of the most solemn occasions was when He charged the Apostles: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

2. On certain occasions, the Holy Ghost appeared in *visible form*. When Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a dove. On Pentecost, the Holy Ghost descended with a mighty rushing wind, and rested over the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire.

These signs are symbolic of the action of the Holy Ghost. The form of a dove symbolizes the *gentleness* with which the Holy Spirit works in our souls. The rush of wind represents the *strengthening* of the will. The fire represents *zeal*, fervor, and the illumination of the mind.

3. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

This does not mean that the Holy Ghost began to exist later in time than the Father and the Son. He proceeded from them from all eternity; He is to them as warmth is to fire, existing and proceeding at the same time. There can be no fire without warmth; if there were an eternal fire, there would be an eternal warmth. So since there are the eternal Father and Son, there is the eternal Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the eternal, mutual love that the Father and Son bear each other; but instead of being mere feeling, He is a Person, a Being, God.

4. The Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and the Son, because He is God.

True God as the Father and the Son are, the Holy Ghost is eternal, all-knowing, almighty. The Third Person is called *Holy Spirit*, from the Latin word *spiritus*, a breath. He was breathed forth by the Father and the Son. In English we also call Him *Holy Ghost*. Other names used to refer to the Holy Ghost are: Advocate, Paraclete, Consoler, Comforter, Substantial Love, Spirit of Truth, etc.

What does the Holy Ghost do for the salvation of mankind?—The Holy Ghost dwells in the Church as the source of its life, and sanctifies souls through the gift of grace.

1. Although all Divine works depend on *all* Three Persons, we attribute the work of sanctification to God the Holy Ghost, because He is the oneness of love of the Father and the Son, and the sanctification of man by grace reveals that boundless love.

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16).

2. After Baptism, we have the Holy Ghost in our hearts and He remains with us as long as we have *no mortal sin* on our souls. This is the gift of "sanctifying grace".

Then we say that the Spirit of God dwells in us. We should therefore treat our body with great reverence, for it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost is given in a very special manner in the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders.

3. The Holy Ghost is the *source* of the life of the Church. He consoles, guides, and imparts strength to it, as Christ promised.

"The Church was filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:31). "Many things yet I have to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will teach you all the truth" (John 16:12-13).

When was the dwelling of the Holy Ghost first visibly manifested in the Church? – The dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Church was first visibly manifested on Pentecost Sunday, when He came down upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire.

After the Ascension of Our Lord, the Apostles together with the Blessed Virgin and disciples, men and women, numbering about 120 persons, gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem, where they spent the time in prayer, waiting for the fulfillment of Christ's promise (Acts. 1:14). "But wait here in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

1. Jesus had *promised* to send the Holy Ghost to the Apostles. He said at the Last Supper: "It is expedient for you that I depart. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you" (John 16:7). On Pentecost, ten days after the Ascension, the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles and disciples.

On Pentecost three thousand members were baptized after the preaching of St. Peter. Many believed, because the Apostles had the "gift of tongues"; that is, they spoke in one language, but those of different races who listened heard what was said in their own different languages.

2. We celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost today as ***Pentecost Sunday***, ten days after Ascension Thursday, fifty days after Easter. *Pentecost* means *fifty*.

The *nine days* of prayer spent by the disciples while they awaited the Holy Ghost was the *first novena* in the Church. Today we have the custom of making novenas especially before great feasts, to prepare ourselves for them. We also make novenas of petition or thanksgiving. On the eve of Pentecost it is the custom to bless the baptismal font, as on Holy Saturday, in remembrance of the first members received into the Church.

How long will the Holy Ghost dwell in the Church?—The Holy Ghost will dwell in the Church until the end of time.

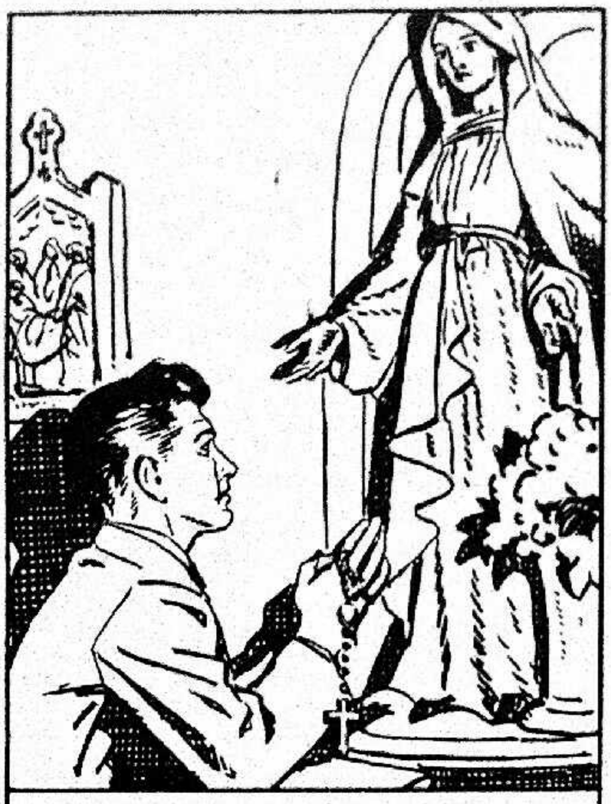
"I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to dwell with you forever, the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16-17).

1. The Holy Ghost watches over the Church, *protecting* it from destruction. From the beginning the Church spread very rapidly. At the death of the Apostles, in spite of persecutions, it was known in all parts of the then civilized world. Thence it has spread to the ends of the earth.

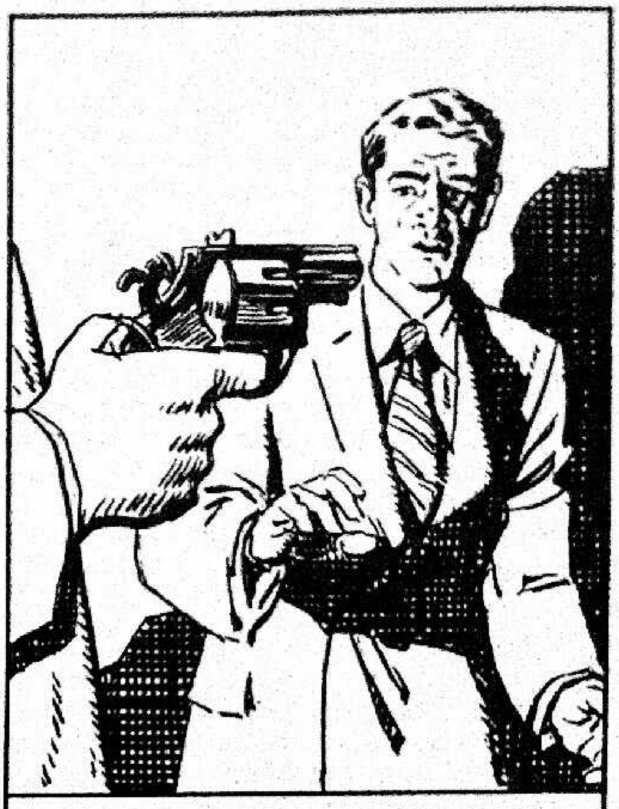
St. Paul could say: "Yes, indeed, their voice has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" (Rom. 10:18).

2. The Holy Ghost gave *testimony* of Christ, and strengthened the Apostles to give testimony of Christ.

Our Lord said, "But when the Advocate has come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness concerning me. And you also bear witness" (John 15:26, 27). By His descent, the Holy Ghost proved that all Jesus Christ had said and done was true, that He was indeed the Son of God. After the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles gave testimony of Christ by going all over the world. (Acts 1:8), preaching and suffering for Christ, meeting death joyfully (Acts 5:41; Rom. 8:18), saying, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."



WHEN IN A STATE OF GRACE



WHEN GRACE IS LOST

A soul in the state of grace is very beautiful in the sight of God. Then we are friends and children of God and heirs of heaven; then we are like the very angels. We must always try to avoid sin.

But when the soul has lost the grace of God by mortal sin, nothing on earth can be uglier in God's sight. If we are so careful about our personal appearance before mortals, how much more should we be careful about the appearance of our immortal soul, that God may be pleased with us.

39. Sanctifying Grace

What is grace?—Grace is a supernatural gift of God bestowed on us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation.

1. Grace is a favor, *a free gift*, granted to us though we have no claim to it. God grants us graces because He is good, not because we *deserve* them. God grants us graces for the sake of His Son, Who died on the cross to earn for us these graces; we men can never merit these graces.

"All have sinned and have need of the glory of God. They are justified *freely* by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ" (Rom. 3:23-24).

2. The ***Holy Ghost*** dispenses the graces of God merited by Our Lord Jesus Christ; He bestows and perfects what is already earned, and acts as the channel of grace.

In a similar manner the sun does not make the plants, but develops what is already planted; without the sun plants would die and be useless to man.

3. The *supernatural* is that which is beyond natural powers. It is of two kinds:

(a) When the fact is beyond natural powers in the manner of occurence: as when a blind man instantly can see; and

(b) When the fact fundamentally and entirely surpasses all powers of the natural order: as when God imparts a part of His life to man through the gift of sanctifying grace.

4. The assistance of the Holy Ghost is *necessary*. Without the help of the graces that He dispenses, with merely natural powers, we cannot do the least work to merit salvation. Without God, we are nothing.

In order to reach heaven, we need God's grace; so we say with the Apostle: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5); "By the grace of God I am what I am. . . . I have laboured more than any of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (1 Cor. 15:10).

5. There are two kinds of grace: sanctifying grace and actual grace.

What is sanctifying grace?—Sanctifying grace is that grace which confers on our souls a new life, that is, a sharing in the life of God Himself.

1. By sanctifying grace, our souls are made holy and pleasing to God. It is an *abiding* or *permanent* grace, which we gain by baptism, and lose only by mortal sin.

By Adam's sin all mankind lost the friendship of God; that is, we are born in original sin, *without* sanctifying grace. Our Lord's death won back sanctifying grace for us; it is granted freely at Baptism.

2. A soul to whom God grants sanctifying grace receives not merely a gift from God, but *God Himself*. The Holy Ghost lives in him and becomes united with him, so that he receives a new life, a new nature.

St. Paul refers to this acquisition of sanctifying grace as the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new. It is as if an old and worn man were suddenly to become a handsome young man full of the vigor of life. The beauty of a soul in the state of sanctifying grace is too great for human eyes to bear. As a child said, when asked how his soul would look immediately after his confirmation, if it could be photographed, "Why, it would look like God!"

What are the chief effects of sanctifying grace? — The chief effects of sanctifying grace are:

First, it makes us holy and pleasing to God.—When we are in possession of sanctifying grace, we are *free* from mortal sin; the two cannot dwell together. The fire of the Holy Ghost sears away all that God abhors, so that we acquire God's friendship.

However, although free from mortal sin, we do not, with sanctifying grace, become free from the remains of sin. So even saints feel the human inclination to sin, against which the struggle is lifelong, and from which we should gain merit. This human frailty is imbedded in our flesh, and is present in our souls as a result of original sin.

Sanctifying grace, however, although it does not cure us of the weakness of the flesh, strengthens our will, so that for us the war against sin becomes easier. The charity accompanying sanctifying grace makes us more prone to good works, more attracted to God, with minds illumined as to the folly of sin.

Second, it makes us adopted children of God. — With sanctifying grace, the Holy Ghost *enters* our soul; we are led by His Spirit, and are therefore His children: "For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

"Now you have not received a spirit of bondage so as to be again in fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons, by virtue of which we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are sons of God" (Rom. 8:15-16).

Third, it makes us temples of the Holy Ghost.—Sanctifying grace brings the Holy Ghost to dwell in us as in a *temple*. St. Paul says, "For you are the temple of the Living God" (2 Cor. 6:16).

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, him will God destroy; for holy is the temple of God and this temple you are" (1 Cor. 3:16,17).

Fourth, it gives us the right to heaven.—When we are in sanctifying grace, we are inspired to do *good works*. The Holy Ghost does not sleep within us, but expands our heart with His grace, and urges our will to do good. And as we are adopted children of God, such actions become meritorious for heaven.

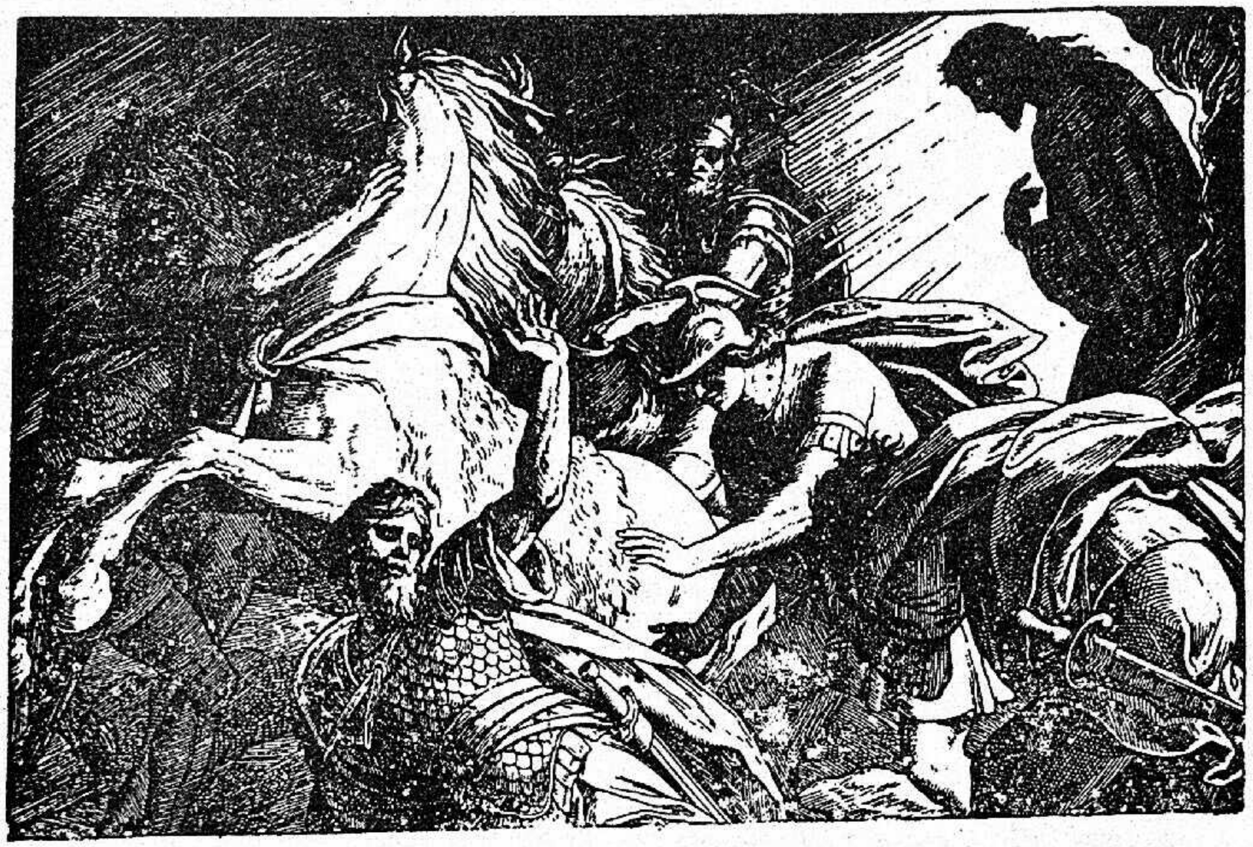
If we are children of God, we are at the same time heirs, and therefore have a right to His Kingdom. "We are the sons of God. But if we are sons, we are heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16-17).

Why is sanctifying grace necessary for salvation? — Sanctifying grace is necessary for salvation because it is the supernatural life, which alone enables us to attain the supernatural happiness of heaven.

The presence of God in the soul gives it life. When the Holy Ghost is dwelling in the soul, it is enabled to know and love God, to do supernatural works. Speaking of the "gift of God", Our Lord said it "shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up unto life everlasting" (John 4:14). Without sanctifying grace, the soul is without God; and without God, the soul becomes the devil's.

One cannot gain any merit for heaven as long as he is not in sanctifying grace, what is termed *"in the state of grace"*. For without sanctifying grace one is an enemy of God, and cannot enter His kingdom.

Mortal sin makes the soul displeasing to God, and thus deprives it of sanctifying grace.



The case of Saul of Tarsus is one of the most wonderful instances of cooperation with God's grace. Saul of Tarsus was one of the most active persecutors of the early Christians. On the way to Damascus to arrest Christians, Saul was struck down by a brilliant light, and heard a voice say: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?" Saul asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" And Jesus answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou art persecuting." Saul immediately grasped at grace, and asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" From then on he turned his back on his former life, and belonged completely to Christ, till as the incomparable Apostle Paul he was martyred in Rome.

40. Actual Grace

What is actual grace?—Actual grace is a supernatural help of God which enlightens our mind and strengthens our will to do good and to avoid evil.

By actual grace the Holy Ghost shows us the emptiness in themselves of earthly things. He makes us see our own sins, and the true goal of life. By it we can perform a virtuous act or reject a temptation.

1. Actual grace is *transient;* that is, it is given to us only when we need it, to perform a good act, or to overcome a temptation.

An example of the wonderful action of the Holy Ghost in enlightening the mind and strengthening the will is the First Pentecost. Before the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were ignorant and afraid; after His descent, His grace made them wise and fearless men, going forth to preach Christ everywhere, ready to die for their faith.

2. God gives us always *sufficient grace* to be saved. A true Christian should view his whole life in the light of grace. All God's gifts granted for man's salvation are graces.

A good family, a good education,—these are graces. But even sickness and hardships are God's graces, and may be the steps by which to ascend to heaven. And God grants graces to protect us against temptation, never suffering us to be tempted beyond our strength. If we do our part, avoid the occasions of sin, and cooperate with His graces, we shall win.

Is actual grace necessary for all who have attained the use of reason?—Actual grace is necessary for all who have attained the use of reason, because without it we cannot long resist the power of temptation, nor perform other actions which merit a reward in heaven.

1. We *all need* actual grace. Sinners need

it to rise from sin. The just need it to persevere in good. Without grace, we fall into sin.

Herod was offered actual grace when he heard of the birth of the Messias from the three wise men; but Herod rejected the grace, and added to his sins.

2. Grace is given to *all men*, although not in equal amounts. Some receive more, some less. Some ordinary graces are granted to all men; certain extraordinary graces are granted to chosen ones.

God is *free* to bestow His gifts as He likes. The Blessed Virgin received more than other mortals. Christians receive more than pagans. Those in the state of grace are likely to receive more than those in the state of mortal sin. In a way, our graces depend also on *our dispositions*. If we are faithful in corresponding with what we get, we receive more abundantly. Often our carelessness and indifference turn away God's graces from us. We reject Him who only wishes to make us saints, whose "delight is to be with the children of men" (Prov. 8:31).

What are the principal ways of obtaining grace?—The principal ways of obtaining grace are prayer and the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist.

The sacraments of Baptism and Penance give grace to those not possessing it; the other sacraments increase grace in those already in the state of grace.

1. Actual grace is obtained by *good works*. It is especially obtained by the use of *means* offered by the Church, such as hearing Mass, sermons, etc., and receiving the sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist, which contains God, the Source of Grace.

Although we cannot merit grace by our good works, still our good works can beg God for us, to give us grace. Good works are necessary, for God will not save us without our cooperation.

2. Actual grace is made to *act* through various means: through sermons, reading of good books, illness and death, advice of superiors and friends, good example, etc.

The first converts at Pentecost were moved by the preaching of the Apostles. St. Ignatius of Loyola was moved by the reading of the lives of the saints; St. Francis of Assisi, during an illness; St. Francis Borgia, upon seeing the corpse of Queen Isabella. Often God sends us sufferings as a means by which the Holy Ghost may speak to us.

Can we resist the grace of God?—Unfortunately, we can resist the grace of God, for our will is free, and God does not force us to accept His grace.

1. Grace *does not force* us. It leaves us free to choose between good and evil. The Holy Ghost guides and enlightens, but we can still close our eyes to His grace. If we cooperate, we gain other graces.

As Christ said, "For to him who has shall be given, and he shall have abundance" (Matt. 13:12). He who persists in rejecting the gift of God's grace and refuses to be converted will die in his sin and will be forever excluded from the sight of God. "From him who does not have, even that which he seems to have shall be taken away. But as for the unprofitable servant, cast him forth into the darkness outside, where there will be the weeping, and the gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:29-30). Would it not be an insult to a king if he keeps offering gifts to one of his people, and these gifts are despised?

2. We should be on the lookout for the graces of God, ready to *accept* them as soon as they are offered. The action of the Holy Ghost on the individual soul is not continuous in particular graces; we must be ready when He comes with special gifts.

Some receive only one summons to the banquet. In the desert, the Israelites who rose late found the manna melted away. There are times of special grace for the Christian, such as Lent, a retreat, etc.

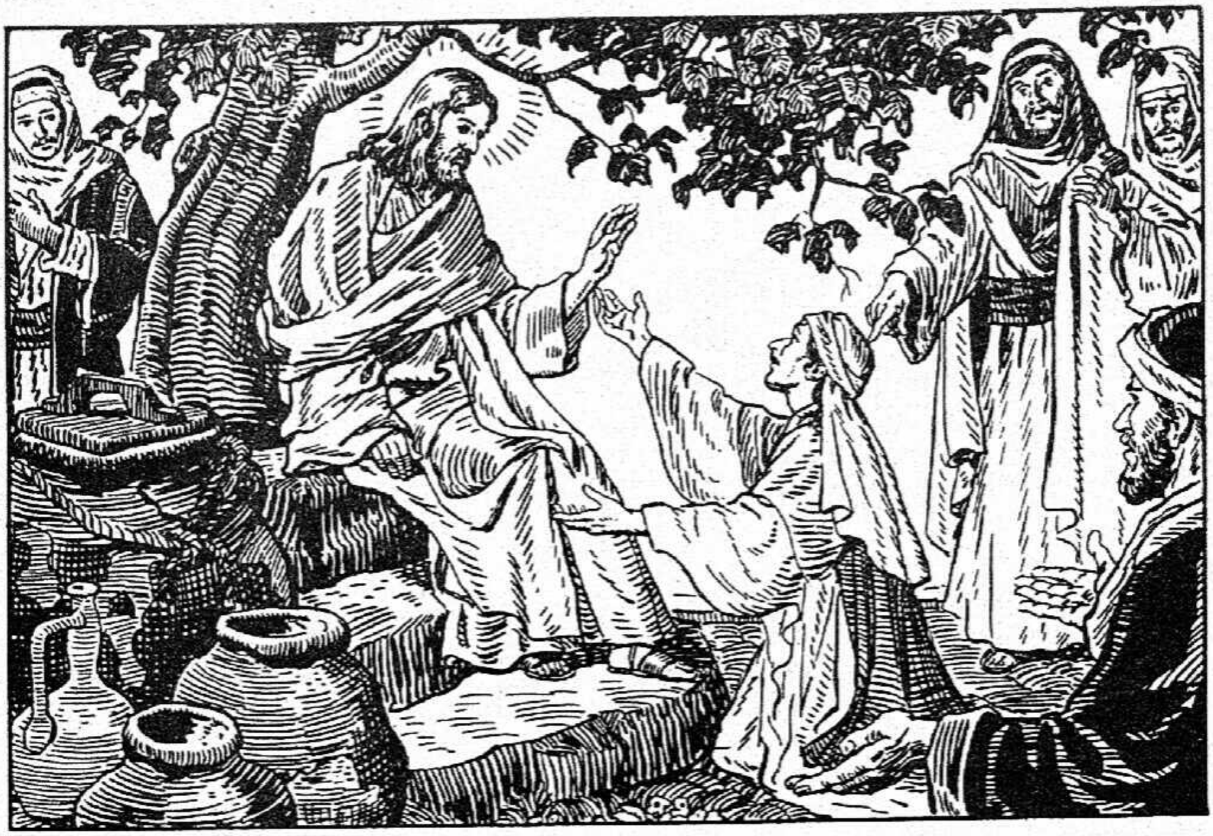
How can we make our most ordinary actions merit a heavenly reward?—We can make our most ordinary actions merit a heavenly reward by doing them for the love of God, and by keeping ourselves in the state of grace.

1. God grants us the *right* to a heavenly reward for the most ordinary good actions in the supernatural order, provided we are in the state of grace. God does not ask us to do extraordinary things. If we do the most ordinary tasks of the day, like cooking, studying, doing small chores, carpentry work, sewing, and such, in a spirit of love and obedience to Him, our acts will deserve merit before God's eyes.

God does not expect all of us to be great scientists saving thousands of lives each day, great discoverers, great lawyers, great statesmen. Does God need our help? All He wants is our love; and this we can give in the most ordinary daily actions. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God."

2. By mortal sin one loses the *merit* he has gained from his good actions. It is necessary that he regain that state of grace before he can regain that merit.

To regain God's friendship, we must be sorry for our sins, make a good confession, and resolve never to displease Him again. Then He will give us back the gift of His grace and love, and the merit of all our good works.



Faith is the foundation of all virtue, for by it God makes Himself known to men. As St. Paul says, "Now faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that are not seen. . . . And without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:1, 6). *It is this supernatural faith that the Chanaanite woman proved, when she persevered in begging Jesus to cure her daughter. Having tested her, He said, "O woman, great is thy faith. Let it be done to thee as thou wilt"* (Matt. 15:28).

41. The Theological Virtues

What are the chief supernatural powers that are bestowed on our souls with sanctifying grace? – The chief supernatural powers that are bestowed on our souls with sanctifying grace are the three theological virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

1. Good qualities or inclinations, whether natural or supernatural, are generally referred to as *"virtues"*. Virtue is a habit that inclines us to whatever is good.

A single good act does not constitute virtue. For instance, one does not have the virtue of faith if one believes in Christ only once a week.

2. Supernatural virtues enter the soul with sanctifying grace, imparted by the Holy Ghost in the *Sacraments* of Baptism and Penance. With sanctifying grace the soul acquires the supernatural light of faith and hope, and burns with the fire of charity. These virtues render us capable of *being* good and *doing* good for the love and service of God, to act *for* instead of *against* Him.

We are not to suppose however that sanctifying grace makes us perfect in the practice of virtue. It gives us the *power* and the *inclination* to be good and do good, but to have perfection we must frequently exercise our virtues. We are given' the power, but if we do not use it, it remains dormant; similarly, we are given legs to use for walking, but if we refuse to walk, the power is dormant. Virtue is a *habit* acquired by repeated good acts.

3. *Natural virtue* enables us to perform good natural acts; it deals directly with things human. *Supernatural virtue* enables us to perform good acts from a supernatural motive, for the glory of God.

If we are temperate in food and drink because we wish to preserve our health, we have a natural virtue; we act according to reason.

4. Natural virtues *compared* to supernatural ones are like a photograph compared to the living original. It is only supernatural virtues that will profit us unto life everlasting, since it is only those whose object and life is God.

Natural virtues mean little compared to the same virtues when supernaturalized, that is, when they flower as a result of the coming of the Holy Ghost into the soul. For instance, if we are temperate in food or drink because in that way we hope to be more pleasing to God and obey His precepts, we act from supernatural virtue.

What are the three theological virtues?—The three theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity.

1. These virtues are called theological, from the Greek term *theos* (meaning God), because their object is God.

An appropriate symbol for the theological virtues is a living tree. Faith is the root, hope the trunk, and charity the fruit. The root and trunk are valueless if they do not find completion in the fruit. The common *symbols* depicting these three virtues are: the cross for faith, the anchor for hope, and the burning heart for charity.

2. He who possesses these three virtues has *all other virtues* in some degree. Without them, he cannot possess any other supernatural virtue nor reach heaven.

We should make *acts* of these virtues every day. We can say very briefly: "O my God, I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, I love Thee. To Thee be honor, praise, and glory forever."

What is faith?—Faith is the virtue by which we firmly believe all the truths God has revealed, on the word of God revealing them, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

1. Faith is *belief* in a truth, on the word of another, though that truth be not fully understood.

In a trial, the judge believes the testimony of a witness known to be an honest man. When a fact is so obvious as "it is dark at midnight," no belief is needed; that is *known*.

2. Divine faith is belief in a truth or mystery known only because *God* revealed it.

We believe the testimony of God; should that be so very difficult?

3. It is *grace* that helps us to attain faith and persevere in it, to take God's word for whatever He has revealed.

Faith is *supernatural* because we cannot by ourselves acquire it. It is a gift of God. It is, however, increased by prayer and continual exercise; the apostles prayed to the Lord, "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5).

4. Without faith, it is *impossible* to be saved.

We must not cease praying for increase of faith, for it is necessary for salvation. "He that believeth not shall be condemned" (Matt. 16:16). "Without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).

5. Our faith must be *firm* and *complete;* that is, both certain and all-encompassing.

If we are doubtful on any matters of faith, considering opposite viewpoints as possibly true, then we deny God's authority. If we accept some truths, and deny others, then that is denying God altogether.

What is hope?—Hope is the virtue by which we firmly trust that God, Who is all-powerful and faithful to His promises, will in His mercy give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it.

1. God *promised* to give man eternal life, and the means to obtain it. In this promise is our hope.

"He that putteth his trust in me shall inherit the land, and shall possess my holy mount" (Is. 57:13).

2. Hope is *necessary* for salvation. Our hope must be firmly founded in God, Who promised to give us the means for salvation.

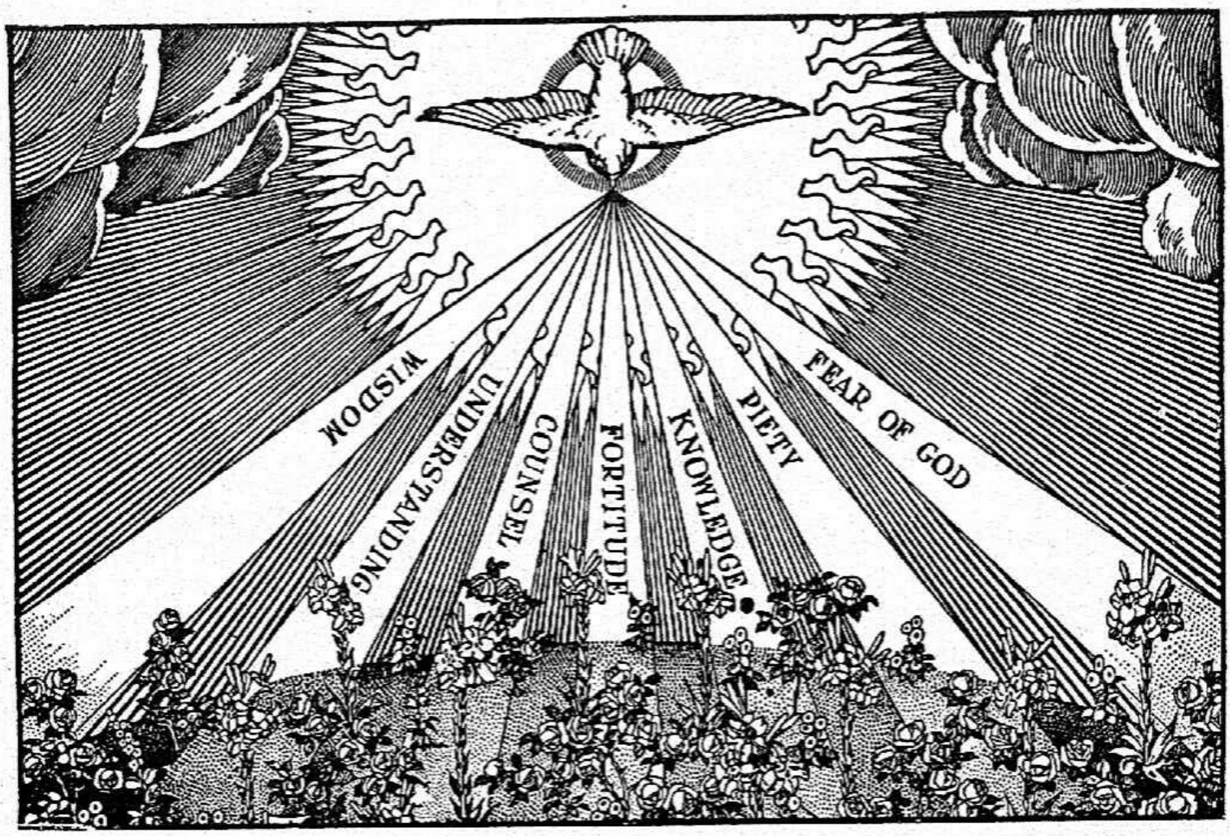
Such firm hope, however, would not exclude reasonable fear of the loss of our soul. Very often we fall far short of the proper use of the means of salvation granted us.

What is charity?—Charity is the virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves, for the love of God.

1. Charity is the queen of virtues. It *unites* God and man perfectly in love. It also unites man and man, for the love of God.

To love God above all things, we must be willing to renounce all created things rather than offend Him by sin. We should often speak to God in acts of love, opening our hearts to Him.

2. In heaven faith and hope will cease; for we cannot need faith for what we already know; nor can we desire what we already possess. But for all eternity we shall have charity: we can love God *forever*.



In the picture the Holy Ghost is represented by a dove. It was in that form that the Holy Ghost showed Himself visibly when St. John baptized Jesus. The dove symbolizes gentleness and peace.

The Holy Ghost dispenses the graces of God. However, the Holy Ghost produces nothing beyond what Jesus Christ merited. The merits of Our Lord are infinite, for He is God. The Holy Ghost merely perfects the works of Christ. In a somewhat similar way, the sun shining on a field does not sow new seed; it merely develops what has been sown, making it bloom and bear fruit.

42. Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Ghost

What are the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost?—The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

The gifts are infused in our souls with sanctifying grace. With God the Holy Ghost come sanctifying grace, and inseparably, His gifts.

1. *Wisdom* is that gift by which we recognize the emptiness of earthly things. By it we come to regard God and spiritual things as of the highest good. Without the gift of wisdom we are indifferent to spiritual matters, avoiding all mortification.

The best example of the effects of the gifts of the Holy Ghost are the Apostles, who after receiving the Holy Ghost became penetrated with His graces.

2. *Understanding* is that gift by which we are enabled to recognize the true Catholic teaching, and to detect false doctrines. Before the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles, they did not understand the divine mysteries Christ revealed to them, often interpreting His words materially.

Saint Clement Hofbauer began his studies late in life, and had just enough instruction in theology to be ordained. But he was often consulted by high officials of the Church on matters of doctrine, because he had the gift of understanding to an extraordinary degree.

3. The gift of *counsel* helps us to discover the will of God under difficult circumstances.

Before they received the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were inconstant in their thoughts, desires, and actions, at one time full of high zeal, at other times despairing and weak. But Christ promised them the gift of counsel, saying: "Do not be anxious how or wherewith you shall defend yourselves, or what you shall say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you" (Luke 12:11).

4. *Fortitude* is the gift by which we are strengthened under trials, to do God's will.

Before the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were of good will, but they were weak and fearful. For instance, when Jesus was taken prisoner, they all fled. St. John Nepomucene chose to be tortured, and finally cast into the river, rather than break the seal of the confessional.

5. The gift of *knowledge* enables us to grasp the teaching of the Church, to know God and Jesus Christ Whom He sent.

Before the advent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were ignorant men who did not care for intellectual pursuits; neither were they expert in holiness or the things of God. The saintly Cure d'Ars had made but little study, yet his sermons were so remarkable that even Bishops were eager to listen.

6. *Piety* is that gift by which we love God as our Father, ever striving to do His will.

Before the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles loved Jesus, but more for their own sakes rather than His, more for the reward He promised than for love of Him. But after Pentecost, what a change! They were ready to suffer death just because they loved Jesus and wished to declare Him everywhere.

7. The *fear of the Lord* makes us dread sin as the greatest of all evils, and enables us to quell fear of man and human respect.

Eleazer, the old Jewish scribe, chose death rather than offend God by eating, or even pretending to eat, forbidden meats (2 Mach. 6).

8. Besides these seven gifts, the Holy Ghost also grants certain *extraordinary gifts,* which are given only on rare occasions and to selected persons. Such extraordinary graces are granted principally not for the benefit of the recipient, but of others. They were common during the early days of the Church, and helped in its rapid spread. Among them are the gift of tongues, of miracles, of visions, and of prophecy. The Apostles received the gift of tongues on Pentecost, so that although they spoke to a crowd of different nationalities and languages, everybody understood what was said.

The Apostles also possessed the gift of miracles, curing the sick, driving out evil spirits, raising the dead to life. Many saints have been blessed with the gift of miracles. The prophets before the coming of Christ foretold future events. A number of the saints have been granted the gift of visions and ecstasies, though this is rare; good examples are St. Francis of Assisi, who received the stigmata of Our Lord's wounds, and St. Catherine of Siena.

How do the gifts of the Holy Ghost help us?—The gifts of the Holy Ghost help us by making us more alert to discern and more ready to do the will of God.

1. If we look with discerning eyes, we can see how the gifts of the Holy Ghost have greatly *helped* the world at large.

As the psalmist sang: "Thou shalt send forth Thy spirit, and they shall be created: and thou shalt renew the face of the earth" (Ps. 103:30). "And hope does not disappoint, because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 5:5).

2. The *operations* of the Holy Ghost were easily discernible among the early Christians.

"And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in the communion of the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. And . . . many wonders also and signs were done by means of the apostles" (Acts 2:42-43).

3. The difference between the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost consists in this: the virtues enable us to do what our *reason* directs; the gifts make us follow the *inspirations* of the Holy Ghost.

Which are some of the effects in us of the gifts of the Holy Ghost?—Some of the effects in us of the gifts of the Holy Ghost are the fruits of the Holy Ghost and the beatitudes.

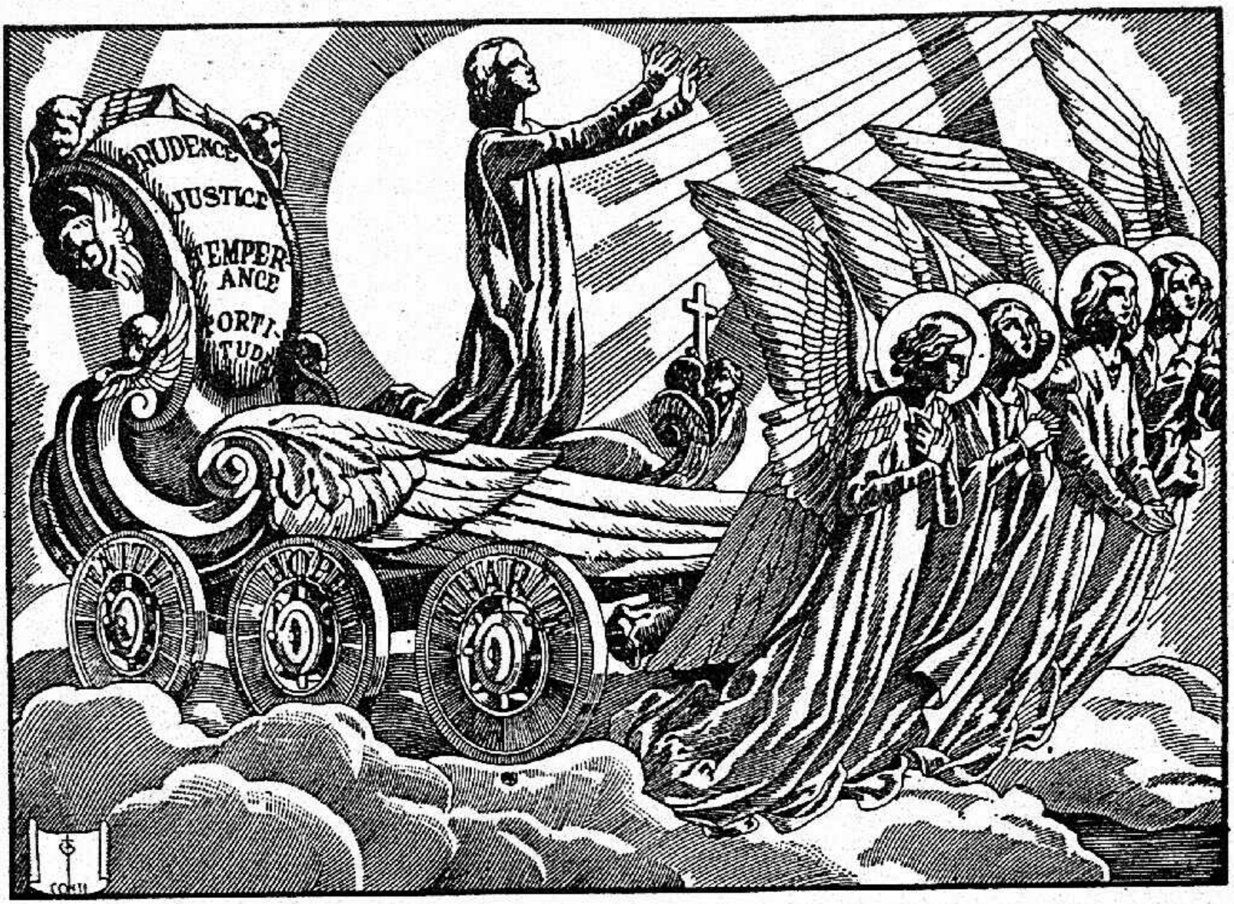
Which are the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost? — The twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost are: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, and chastity.

1. These twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost are *good habits* performed under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. They make us happy and contented, and help us to be pleasing to both God and man.

With the fruits of the Holy Ghost it becomes easier for us to persevere in the union with God by the practice of virtue; our heart inclines with charity towards God and our neighbor, and finds it almost *natural* to be detached from the world.

2. With the gift of sanctifying grace and its accompanying theological virtues, gifts of the Holy Ghost, and their effects, the Christian soul may be said to possess *sanctity,* to be in the state of Christian perfection.

Sanctity is the fervent surrender of one's self to God and the practice of virtue. It does not require extraordinary works. The Blessed Mother of God, the most holy of mortals, never performed any extraordinary works to excite worldly admiration. *"Love is the fulfilling of the law."*



The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity furnish a strong basis for all other virtues. The cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, are the foundation of all moral virtues. The theological virtues define our relations with God; the moral virtues define our relations with ourselves and our fellowmen. If we have these virtues, we are on the way to perfection.

43. Moral Virtues

Are there any other virtues besides the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity?—Besides the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, there are other virtues, called moral virtues.

1. These virtues are called moral virtues because they dispose us to lead ***moral,*** or good lives, by aiding us to treat persons and things in the right way, that is, according to the will of God. Moral virtues are opposed to the capital sins.

For example, *humility* is opposed to pride; *liberality* is opposed to avarice; *chastity* is opposed to lust; *meekness* and *patience* are opposed to anger; *temperance* is opposed to gluttony; *brotherly love* is opposed to envy; and *zeal* and *diligence* in what is good are opposed to sloth.

2. Moral virtues are an outgrowth and *completion* of the theological virtues. The theological virtues perfect our interior being; the moral virtues perfect our *exterior*. If we sincerely strive after these virtues, we are on the road to perfection.

The theological virtues affect our relations with God; the moral virtues affect our relations with our neighbor and our own selves. For example, faith makes us believe in the existence of God. Temperance makes us regulate our appetites.

Which are the chief moral virtues?—The chief moral virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance; these are called cardinal virtues.

All other moral virtues spring from the cardinal virtues. These are called *cardinal* from *cardo,* the Latin word for *hinge,* because all our moral actions turn on them as a door turns upon its hinges. All other moral virtues depend on them.

How do prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance dispose us to lead good lives? —Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance dispose us to lead good lives, as indicated below:

1. *Prudence* disposes us in all circumstances to form right judgments about what we must do or not do.—It teaches us when and how to act in matters relating to our eternal salvation. Prudence perfects the intelligence, which is the power of forming judgments; for this virtue, knowledge and experience are important.

Prudence shows us how to leave earthly things in order to earn riches for eternity. It is the eye of the soul, for it tells us what is good and what is evil. It is like a compass that directs our course in life. It is opposed to worldly wisdom. "Be prudent therefore and watchful in prayers" (1 Pet. 4:7). Prudence is a virtue of the understanding.

2. *Justice* disposes us to give everyone what belongs to him.—It teaches us to give what is due to God and to man. It makes us willing to live according to the commandments. Justice perfects the will and safeguards the rights of man: his right to life, freedom, honor, good name, sanctity of the home, and external possessions.

The just man is an upright man. He gives to every one his due: he gives God worship; the authorities, obedience; his subordinates, rewards and punishments; and his equals, brotherly love. "Render to all men whatever is their due; tribute to whom tribute is due; taxes to whom taxes are due; fear to whom fear is due; honor to whom honor is due" (Rom. 13:7).

3. *Fortitude* disposes us to do what is good in spite of any difficulty.—It gives us strength to do good and avoid evil in spite of all obstacles and afflictions.

We possess fortitude when we are not hindered by ridicule, threats, or persecution from doing what is right; when we are ready, if necessary, to suffer death. The greatest fortitude is shown by *bearing great suffering* rather than undertaking great works. No saint was ever a coward. The martyrs had fortitude.

4. *Temperance* disposes us to control our desires and to use rightly the things which please our senses.—It regulates our judgment and passions, so that we may make use of temporal things only in so far as they are necessary for our eternal salvation. We have temperance when we eat and drink only what is necessary to sustain life, preserve health, and fulfill our duties.

We should strive to be like St. Francis of Sales, who said: "I desire very little, and that little I desire but little." However, temperance does not consist in refusing or denying ourselves what is necessary, thus unfitting ourselves for good works.

Which are some of the other moral virtues?—Some of the other moral virtues are:

1. *Filial piety* and *patriotism,* which dispose us to honor, love, and respect our parents and our country. It is, however, no virtue but a sin if we are so prejudiced in favor of our parents that we find no good in others; or if we are so "patriotic" that we see no good in other nations.

The division and mutual antagonisms of nations and peoples in which certain ones profess to find themselves as "superior" can certainly not please God; from them come war and revenge. God is Father of all nations and peoples, without exception.

2. *Obedience,* which disposes us to do the will of our superiors. Obedience consists not only in *doing* what is commanded by our superior, but in being *willing to do* what is commanded. One who grumbles and murmurs while doing what his mother asks him to do is not obedient.

Obedience is a virtue only when one subjects his will to that of another for God's sake, not for material or natural motives. Christ is the model of obedience, for He obeyed completely and lovingly, even to the death of the Cross. "An obedient man shall speak of victory" (Prov. 21:28).

3. *Veracity,* which disposes us to tell the truth.

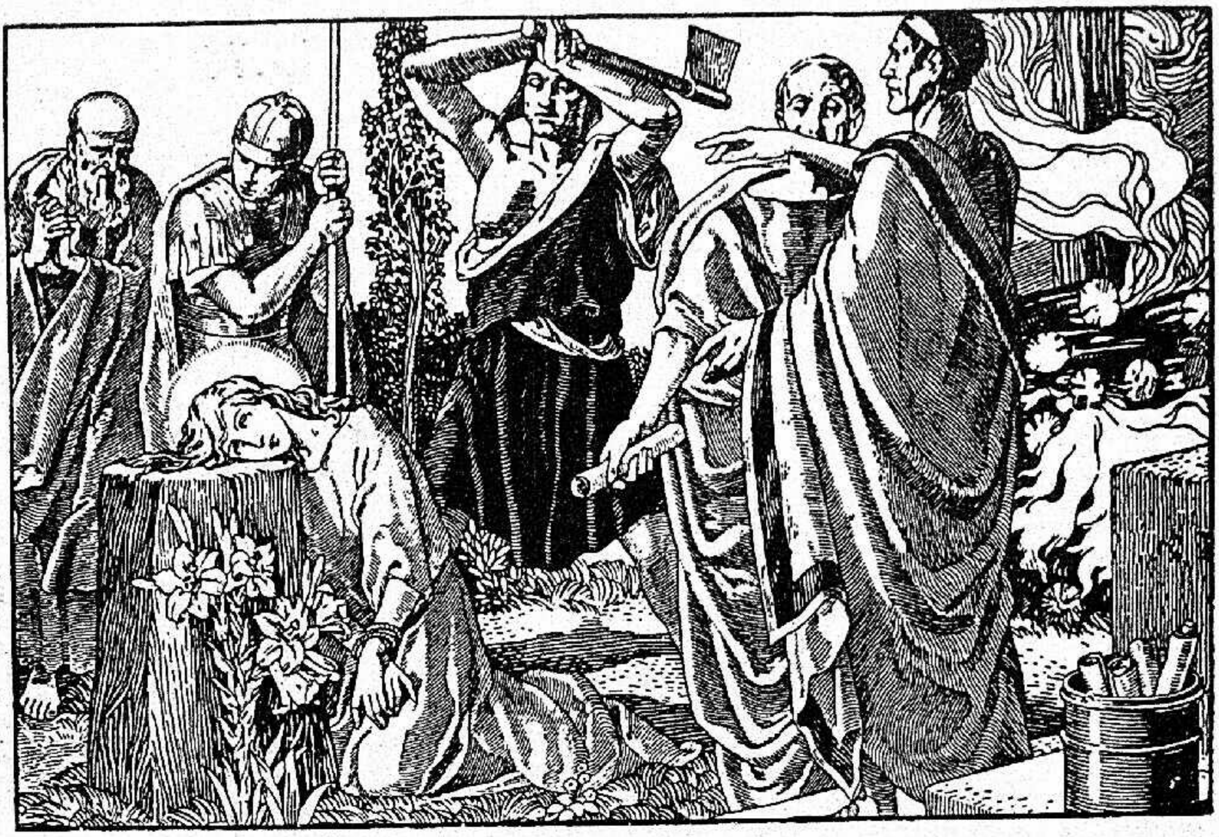
We should always be truthful, as children of God, Who is Truth itself. Veracity, however, does not require us to reveal secrets, or to reply to questions about which the questioner has no right to ask. In cases such as these, we should either remain silent, or return an evasive answer. "Wherefore, put away lying, and speak truth each one with his neighbor, because we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).

4. *Patience,* which disposes us to bear up under trials and difficulties.

In sickness and ill fortune, in the difficulties of our occupations, in our weaknesses, let us have serenity of mind, for the love of God: "And bear fruit in patience" (Luke 8:15). "Be patient in tribulation, persevering in prayer" (Rom. 12:12).

Besides these, there are many other moral virtues. **Religion** is the highest moral virtue, since it disposes us to offer to God the worship that is due Him.

Religion is classed under the virtue of justice.



At a very early age St. Agnes had such a high regard for the virtue of chastity that she vowed her virginity to God. The Roman authorities, who were persecuting the infant Church, tried to make this child offer incense to the idols, but she refused. Seeing her firmness, the persecutors tried to win her by flattery. She was only thirteen years old, beautiful and wealthy; they offered to marry her to the son of a high official in Rome. But she answered that she was consecrated to her Heavenly Bridegroom. She suffered torture and meekly laid her head on the execution block.

44. Humility, Liberality, Chastity

What is humility? — Humility is that moral virtue which disposes us to appreciate and acknowledge our true position with respect to God and our fellowmen.

Jesus Christ often praised and recommended humility. "Unless you turn, and become like little children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). He always answered the prayers of the humble, as of the centurion (Matt. 8:11). "If any man wishes to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all" (Mark 9:34).

1. The humble man acknowledges God as the *source* of all the excellent things he may possess. He recognizes his limitations, his own nothingness, and the uselessness of all earthly things without God.

Compared to God, what are we? All things pass away; only God is eternal. These simple truths will help us keep humble: without God we are nothing. Let us practice the behest of Our Lord. "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11:29).

2. The humble man knows that earthly things are of value only if they *lead* us to God. His detachment from all things worldly frees him from all human fear.

In order to become humble, let us think often of the majesty and grandeur of God. Let us contemplate His works, beside which ours would be nothing. Above all, let us remember that without God we would not even exist. Do we feel proud of our wealth? Tomorrow a fire, a business depression, may wipe it off completely. Are we proud of our appearance? An accident, some sickness, would make it as if it had never been. Are we proud of our intelligence? Amnesia would take it all away.

3. The humble man has his best *model* in the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ, Who humbled Himself out of love for men.

"Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11:29). The Son of God humbled Himself when He came down to earth as man. He came as a poor man, in the eyes of the world the son of a carpenter. His companions were simple fishermen. He associated with the humble, with sinners even. At the Last Supper He washed the feet of His apostles. He was put to death on the cross, the manner of death then most despised.

4. Our Lord continually urged us to humility; as when He said, "He who is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11).

In the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, Christ exalted humility; as also He did when, taking a little child, He said, "Whoever, therefore, humbles himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:4). And again He said, after preaching to His disciples, "When you have done everything that was commanded you, say: 'We are unprofitable servants'" (Luke 17:10).

5. Humility is *opposed* both to pride and to excessive and affected self-abjection.

To be humble, a man does not need to belittle his abilities. St. Thomas Aquinas says: That a person should recognize and appreciate his own good qualities is not sin." (*See pages* 50-51.)

What is liberality?—Liberality is that moral virtue, related to the cardinal virtue of justice, which finds expression in generosity towards our fellowmen, disposing us to use material goods rightly.

1. Ordinarily the term is taken with reference to *material* goods; but in a broader sense it also is with respect to spiritual and intellectual gifts.

Liberality consists in giving, for the love of God, generous help to those in need. Our Lord said, in urging us to do works of mercy, that what is given to the poor is given to Him. Liberality does not depend on the amount given, but in the spirit. A poor man can be very liberal; whereas a rich man who gives millions, but does so only in order to get praised does not have the virtue of generosity.

2. Liberality is *opposed* to covetousness.

With liberality we become willing for the love of God to help out those in material need. This virtue does not depend on the amount or material value of the gift, but in the goodness of the heart with which it is given. (*See page* 51.)

What is chastity?—Chastity is that moral virtue which disposes us to be pure in soul and body.

Those who keep themselves pure in soul and body are like angels on earth. It was the chaste Apostle John to whom Christ gave the privilege of leaning on His breast at the Last Supper; it was to him that He entrusted His Virgin Mother.

1. *Chastity,* opposed to lust, disposes us to preserve the mind and body from everything that is impure. Chastity is purity. It is termed the *angelic virtue,* because it makes men resemble the angels in heaven.

Chastity gives health to the soul and light to the understanding; it aids wisdom and develops strength of character. Judith, a weak woman, had the courage to go into the enemy camp, and returned with the head of Holofernes; of her Holy Scripture says, "Thou hast done manfully and thy heart hath been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity" (Judith 15:11). Thousands of martyrs died in defense of this virtue of holy chastity.

2. For the *unmarried,* chastity forbids indulgence of the sexual appetite; for the married, it regulates the use of that appetite in accordance with the dictates of right reason. It is wrong to suppose that chastity is not a virtue for *the married.* God requires chastity from everyone, in all states of life. A chaste marriage is the basis of the Christian family.

Not all saints are virgins. God requires chastity to be practiced by all, in accordance with the state of life that each has embraced. It may be either absolute (for the unmarried), or relative (for the married).

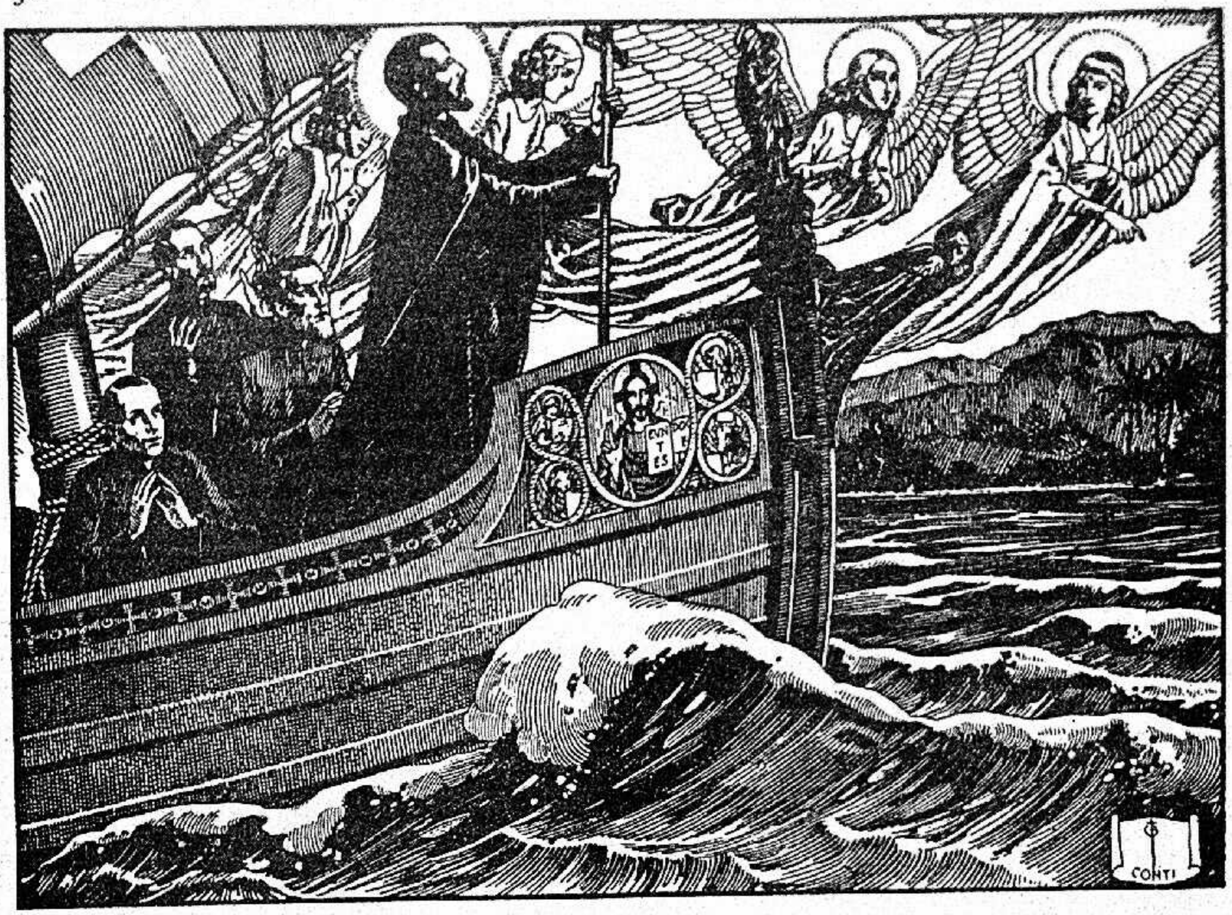
3. The mere knowledge of facts does not destroy our chastity. It is wilful consent and yielding to impurity that sullies chastity of mind and body.

Jesus Christ, Our Lady, St. Joseph, and other saints surely knew the facts of sex; but such knowledge did not spoil their spotless chastity.

4. Let us be careful of the *company* we keep, and avoid all occasions of sin to preserve virtue of chastity. Let us form the habit of *temperance* in all things, so as to strengthen our self-control. We should often have recourse to prayer and the sacraments, receiving these frequently. "Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). (*See page* 51.)

Let us have a special devotion to the *Blessed Virgin,* and ask her daily to preserve us in chastity. The following prayer has in many cases been found efficacious in imploring the Blessed Virgin to preserve one's chastity:

"My Queen, my Mother! I give myself entirely to thee; and to show my devotion to thee, I consecrate to thee this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Wherefore, good Mother, as I am thine own, keep me, guard me as thy property and possession."



As an example of true zeal we have the Apostle of the Indies, the Patron of Catholic Missions, St. Francis Xavier. Born of a noble family of Navarre, a descendant of kings, he was brought up for a career of earthly power and glory. But he met St. Ignatius, and decided to become a soldier for Christ. Inflamed with zeal, wishing only to reap rich harvests for God, he went through India, Malaya, and Japan planting the seed of the Faith, converting innumerable heathen to Christ. In Japan so fruitful was his apostolate that a generation after him the Christian population still totalled 400,000 souls. He is Protector of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

45. Meekness, Abstinence, Zeal, Brotherly Love

What is meekness? — Meekness is that moral virtue which disposes us to control anger when offended, and resentment when rebuked.

Meekness however must be distinguished from *pusillanimity,* which is weakness of spirit, and cowardliness.

1. Meekness is *patience* between man and man. It is related to the cardinal virtue of temperance, and is *opposed* to the sin of anger. The patient man keeps calm in the midst of the vicissitudes of life; he preserves his cheerfulness for the *love of God.*

The motive is important. If we are calm and patient only because we hope to be admired or because we thereby wish to avoid temporal trouble, by indifference, then we do not practice virtue. Virtue is the result of love for God, doing things for His sake, because it is His law or desire. "By your patience you will win your souls" (Luke 21:19).

2. We must endure with serenity *all trials,* not merely a part of them, in order to be truly patient.

For instance, some are patient with sickness, but keep lamenting their being a burden to others on its account. Some are patient with others, but have no patience with themselves: for example, they feel irritated if they fall back into old sins. Such persons are not truly patient and meek; they show traces of pride, believing themselves too good to relapse into old sins. "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 16:21).

3. The patient and meek man shows no anger when wrong is done him. He is a peacemaker at heart. However, although we should forgive and forget wrongs for the sake of peace, we must not give in to sin just to avoid opposing others; this would be sinful. Let us keep the peace with all when there is no good reason to break it; this should be our policy.

Our Lord is the best example of meekness and patience. Did He use His almighty power to punish those who did Him evil? For hours He hung meekly on the cross, until He died. Every day God is patient with sinners, giving them time to change their ways.

4. The meek man is master of his own self; he has self-control, and will find it easy to control others. He has peace of mind, and will attain heaven, the home of the meek of heart. (*See pages* 52-53.)

Let us gaze at Jesus Crucified; He is the supreme example of meekness, the Lamb of God: "And I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim" (Jer. 11:19). Indeed, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth" (Matt. 5:4)—the land of the hearts of their fellowmen. As St. Francis de Sales practically said, "One catches more flies with an ounce of honey than with tons of vinegar."

What is abstinence?—Abstinence is that moral virtue, related to the cardinal virtue of temperance, which keeps within bounds use of and pleasure in foods or drink.

This general sense is to be understood as different from the particularized sense of "abstinence" during certain days, such as Fridays of Lent.

1. A temperate man eats only what he needs, does not fully satisfy his appetite, and is not dainty about the kind of food he eats. The virtue of abstinence is *opposed* to the sin of gluttony.

One who is moderate in eating will be moderate also in many other things, and will escape numerous evils and sins. He always remembers the words of Our Lord: "Not in bread alone doth man live."

2. Temperance is a boon to both soul and body. It improves the health and strengthens the mind. It increases holiness, and aids towards the attainment of eternal life with God.

A temperate man is like a person who travels light. He can move quickly and reach his destination, heaven, more easily. He is not like those who miss every train on account of the numerous bundles to be counted and carried and taken care of during a journey. (*See page* 53.)

What virtues are opposed to sloth?—The virtues of diligence and zeal are opposed to sloth.

1. From the days of Adam work has been laid as an *obligation* on men. God said to Adam: "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, until thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken" (Gen. 3:19).

All men must work, whether mentally or bodily. The Apostle said: If any man will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). Our Lord worked all His life, and chose working people for His Mother and foster-father. Diligence in labor is a shield against temptation, for thieves do not break into a house full of busy people.

2. In opposition to spiritual sloth, we have *zeal*. It consists in fervor for our salvation and for that of others, out of love of God. It manifests itself in the propagation of the faith, the sanctification of souls, and making God better known. (*See page* 53.)

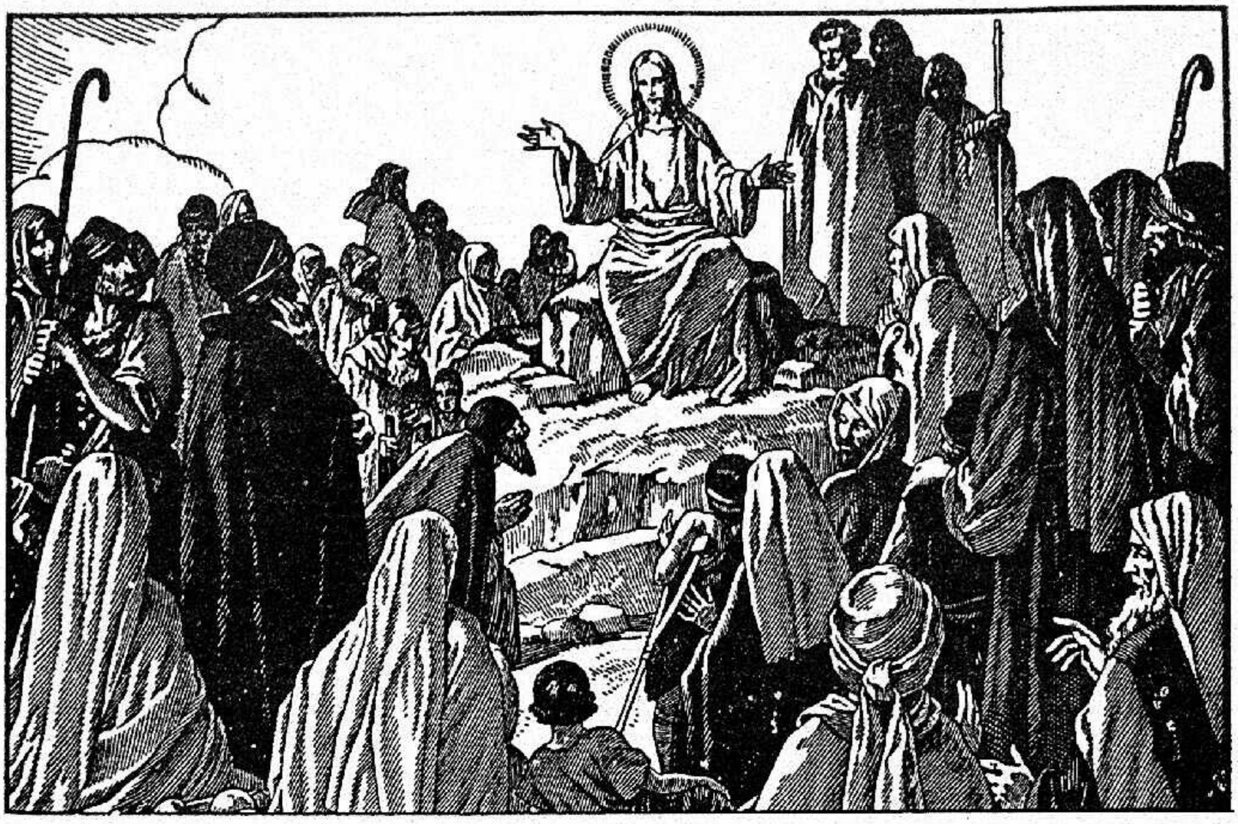
The zealous man talks to God as often as he can in prayer; he does not forget his religious duties. He loses no opportunity in doing good works, and cheerfully makes sacrifices for the love of God. All his works and sufferings he offers to God, for his own salvation as well as for that of others. He works hard, remembering that "The kingdom of heaven has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force" (Matt. 11:12).

What is brotherly love?—Brotherly love is charity towards our fellowmen, our brothers in Christ. (*See page* 53.)

Our Lord said: "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12). And St. John exhorts: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God. . . . He who does not love does not know God; for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8).

Love and *envy* cannot live in the same heart. Our Lord says: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another" (John 13:35); and He commands: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute you" (Mat. 5:44).

If God commands us to love even our enemies, how much more should we love those who have done us no harm, and avoid envying them! Let us remember that the mark of the Christian is love for his fellow-men; all that we do to others, whether for good or ill, we really do to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when we feel the temptation to envy, let us banish it at once by praying for the person, and try our best to do all the good we can to him. In this way we follow Christ our Master.



And opening his mouth he taught them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:1-10).

These are the beatitudes; they are thus called, because they bring us happiness on earth as well as in heaven.

46. The Eight Beatitudes

Which are the eight beatitudes?—The eight beatitudes are:

1. *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

(a) The poor in *spirit* are those who, however great their wealth, dignity, learning, etc., acknowledge that in God's sight they are poor, and realize that their riches come from God. They are detached in heart and mind from worldly possessions, for love of God. Even in this life they are at peace, a foretaste of heaven.

Thus a rich man may in fact be poor in spirit, if he is not attached to his wealth, but spends it freely for good causes, and is willing to be parted from it at God's will. On the other hand a poor man is not truly poor in spirit, if he is not resigned to his poverty, but envies the rich, if he is poor against his will, or prides himself on some quality of his.

(b) In general, the poor in this world's *goods* are also poor in spirit. They are saved from temptations into which the wealthy fall. This is one reason for seeking poverty voluntarily, according to Christ's counsel.

Our Lord often emphasized the difficulty of salvation when one is rich: "But woe to you rich! for you are now having your comfort" (Luke 6:24). "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, . . . and come, follow me" (Matt. 19:21). "With difficulty will a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:23).

(c) We are, however, expected to be industrious. *Pauperism* which is the result of laziness is not a virtue. Beggary which can be avoided is not beneficial either to the individual or to society in general. Each one is obliged to provide for himself and for those dependent on him.

2. *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth."*

(a) The meek are those who bear patiently all the contradictions of life, looking upon them as happening through God's will or by His permission.

The meek shall have peace of heart and peace of life, loved and respected by all, and at death will "possess the earth" of the living, heaven.

(b) Those are also meek who, though of a naturally fiery disposition, master their anger, impatience, or desires for revenge.

The meek man does not get angry or curse or seek revenge. He forgives his enemies, and even wins them by gentle words. He imitates Christ, Who said: "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11:29).

3. *"Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* Here the reference is to spiritual sorrow, grief for sin, one's own sins or the sins of others. It includes a longing amidst the sorrows of life for the joys and peace of heaven.

Mourning for sin is not sadness, for it is not incompatible with spiritual joy. Those who are most penitent feel most gladness upon their release from sin. But to sinners who do not mourn, these words of Our Lord should bring salutary fear: "Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep" (Luke 6:25).

4. *"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied."* This refers to those who ardently desire the things of God, truth and perfect virtue, as well as to those who try to become better, more humble and pure, more closely united with God.

Spiritual hunger and thirst is the craving for growth in holiness, a desire to be more pleasing to God, to make daily progress in doing His will. Even in this life they shall taste the joy of divine consolations; in heaven they shall enjoy the full abundance of heavenly bliss.

5. *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."* The merciful are those who practice the works of mercy, corporal and spiritual, who help others not from human or natural motives simply, but from supernatural ones, from faith, from love of God.

To such people, Christ at the day of judgment will say: "Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in . . ." (Matt. 25:34-35).

6. *"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God."* Only those who are not in habitual sin are clean of heart, and possess virtue. They will be rewarded with the vision of God in heaven; and even on earth by the great light given them.

There are several *degrees* of purity of heart: to the first degree belong those who are free from mortal sin; to the second belong those who are free from deliberate venial sin and all affection for sin; to the third degree belong those who are free from the least ill-regulated affection; to the fourth belong those who are free from the almost imperceptible stains that delay a soul's entrance into God's home; and to the last degree belong those Christians of such purity of life and thought, of such perfection of zeal and intention, that they habitually live for God alone, that they are perfectly united with Him, so that when they close their eyes in death they will fly straight into the Heart of God.

7. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."* Men who love peace and preserve it in themselves and among others are beloved by God.

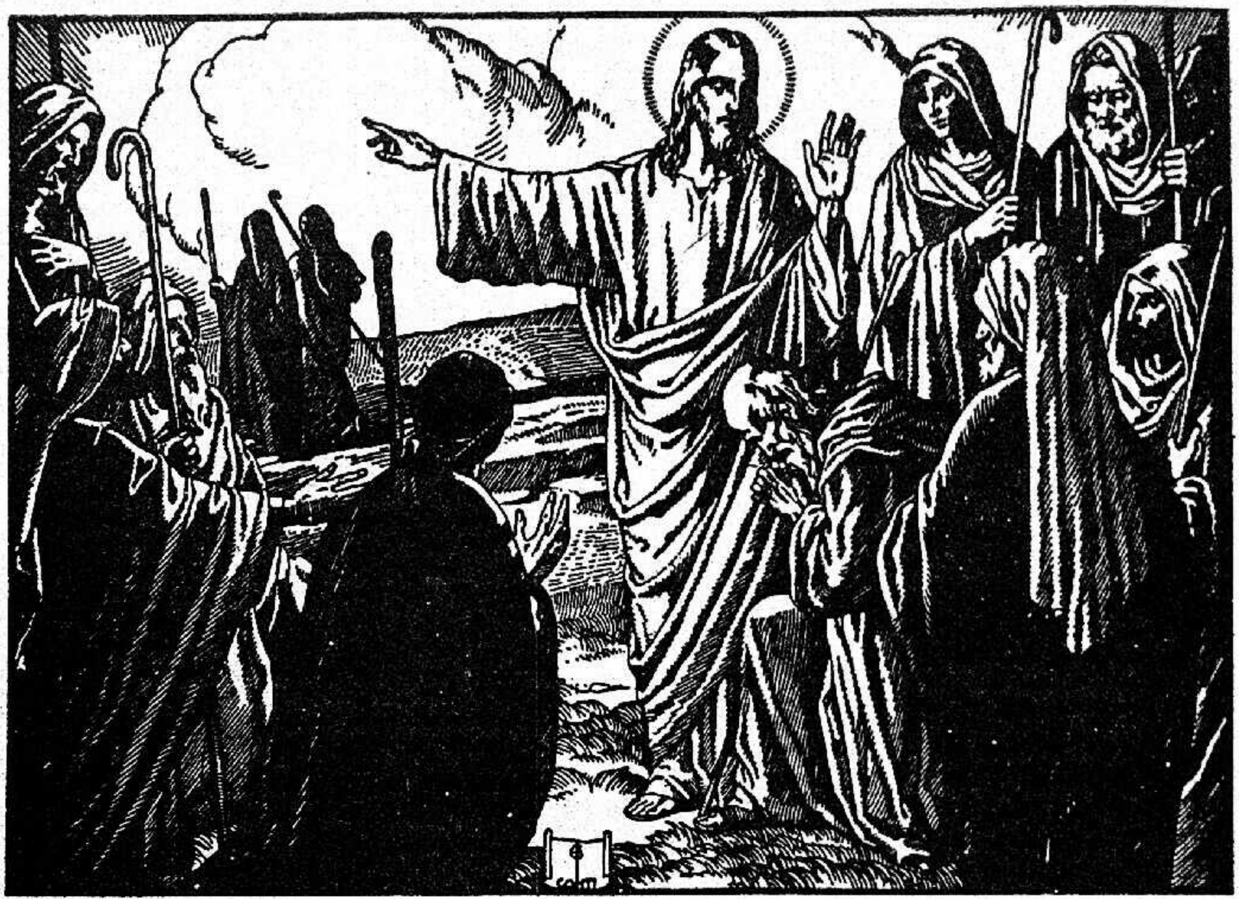
We should also try to reconcile those who are not on good terms with each other. This is a superior degree of the second beatitude.

8. *"Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Those are blessed who suffer for Christ, religion, or some Christian virtue. They will receive an eternal reward.

Those who faithfully observe the entire law of God and defend the cause of His Church, procure His glory and save souls. In this world those who are active in preserving the rights of the Church are often ridiculed and persecuted; they will be especially blessed.

Our Lord preached the Eight Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon He taught something new in the world. Where people had always striven for riches, honors, and pleasures, Christ praised the poor, the humble, the suffering.

If we practice faithfully the doctrine of the eight beatitudes, we shall find the true path of perfection and be happy besides on earth. ***The Beatitudes contain in substance the law of God and all evangelical perfection.***



From among His disciples Our Lord chose twelve Apostles, and gave them special training. He sent them forth to teach His doctrines, saying, "As the Father has sent me, I also send you." The Apostles were the foundation of the True Church. Christ gave them all power and authority, saying, "He who hears you hears me: he who rejects you rejects me."

47. Foundation of the Church

(Ninth Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

Did Jesus Christ found a Church?—Yes; all history, religious and non-religious, including the Bible, clearly proves that Jesus Christ founded a Church.

1. After teaching *publicly* what He required all to believe and practice, thereby announcing the main doctrines of His Church, Christ gathered a number of *disciples*. From them He chose twelve, to whom He gave special instruction and training.

The term "a kingdom", by which Our Lord used to refer to His Church, implies organized authority. And He said to the special men He had chosen, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). He did not teach the disciples for themselves alone, but to be the foundation of His Church. God did not come to save only a few disciples, but all men.

2. Christ said to the men He had chosen: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21), bidding them go and preach the doctrines He had taught. He sent them to all nations, promising salvation to those that should believe, and *threatening condemnation* to those refusing to believe.

"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). God is just; He would not have threatened condemnation to unbelievers unless He had furnished the means whereby they could believe. His Church is this means; all men must join it.

3. Not only did the men chosen by Christ have authority; He gave them *extraordinary powers*, particularly the twelve special men, the Apostles.

"Then having summoned his twelve disciples, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every kind of disease and infirmity" (Matt. 10:1).

(a) They had power to sanctify, when Christ bade them:

"Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

(b) They had power to forgive sin, when Christ said to them:

"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them" (John 20:23).

(c) They had power to rule when Christ said:

"He who hears you hears me; and he who rejects you rejects me; and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Luke 10:16). And: "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven" (Matt. 18:18).

(d) They had power to offer sacrifice, when at the Last Supper Christ, after instituting the Eucharist, bade them:

"Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24-25).

4. After training the disciples and Apostles to form the organization of His Church, Christ chose Simon Peter, and made him the *Chief*. Simon, whose name Christ changed to Peter, was the Head of the Church.

On Simon Christ promised to build His Church, saying: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church" (Matt. 16:18). After the Resurrection He confirmed Peter's authority over the Church, saying to him: "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

5. Finally, He promised to *remain for all time* with the Church He established.

If the death of Our Lord were to do good only to a few persons then living in Judea, its merits would have been very limited. But it could do good to future generations only if there were an organization with authority to carry on His teachings and preserve them from all change. This is His Church.

Why did Jesus Christ found the Church?—Jesus Christ founded the Church to bring all men to eternal salvation.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ established the Church in order to lead men to heaven by:

(a) *Continuing* His teaching and example; and

(b) *Applying* the fruits of His Sacrifice on the cross to all men until the end of the world.

Our Lord gave to the Church a three-fold office: the office of teacher, the office of priest or sanctifier, and the office of pastor or ruler. By these offices Christ intended His Church to accomplish the purpose for which He founded it.

2. After *Pentecost Sunday* the Apostles began to carry out their mission of making disciples of all nations. Through them and their successors this mission continues and will continue to the end of the world.

On the first Pentecost about three thousand were received into the Church after St. Peter's sermon. They were the first members converted and baptized since the Ascension of Our Lord.

Was the Church founded by Christ a visible organization?—The Church founded by Christ was a visible organization, with certain distinguishing marks.

1. No one can deny that Jesus Christ gathered disciples, and out of them chose twelve Apostles, to whom He gave special instruction and orders. He formed them as the *foundation* of His organization; was this not visible?

Speaking of a stubborn man, He said: "If he refuse to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen" (Matt. 18:17). And He promised his disciples: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). Surely something must be visible to bind and loose, to be heard and obeyed. And Christ referred to this visible organization as a city set on a mountain, that cannot be hidden (Matt. 5:14).

2. From the very beginning the Apostles exercised their authority and powers; these were signs of a very visible organization. They did not advise; they *directed*, as superiors, and *decided*, as judges.

Thus St. Paul excommunicated the sinful Corinthian; and he commanded the Hebrews: "Obey your superiors, and be subject to them" (Heb. 13:17).

3. The Apostles and Fathers condemned *schism*. This fact implies a visible organization; for how can there be schism against an invisible body?

St. Paul urged the Corinthians: "By the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that there be no dissensions among you" (1 Cor. 1:10). And St. Cyprian in the third century wrote: "Whoever is separated from the Church is separated from the promises of Christ . . . One cannot have God as a Father who has not the Church as his mother."

Apostolicity of Catholic Doctrines

(Adapted from Cardinal Gibbons, "Faith of Our Fathers")

APOSTOLIC CHURCH	CATHOLIC CHURCH	PROTESTANT CHURCHES
1. Our Saviour gave pre-eminence to *Peter* over the other Apostles: "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16:19). "Strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32). "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).	1. The Catholic Church gives the primacy of honor and jurisdiction to Peter and to his successors.	1. Other Christian communions deny Peter's supremacy over the other Apostles.
2. The Apostolic Church claimed to be *infallible* in her teachings. "When you heard and received from us the word of God, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but, as it truly is, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13).	2. The Catholic Church alone, of all the Christian communions, claims to exercise the prerogative of infallibility in her teaching. Her ministers always speak from the pulpit as having authority, and the faithful receive with implicit confidence what the Church teaches, without once questioning her veracity.	2. Protestant churches repudiate the claim of infallibility, denying that such a gift is possessed by any teachers of religion. The ministers advance opinions as embodying their private interpretation of the Bible. Their hearers are expected to draw their own conclusions from the Bible.
3. Our Saviour enjoined and prescribed rules for *fasting*: "When thou dost fast, anoint thy head and wash thy face, so that thou mayest not be seen by men to fast" (Matt. 6:17). The Apostles fasted before engaging in sacred functions: "They ministered to the Lord, and fasted." "When they had appointed presbyters for them in each church, with prayer and fasting, they commended them to the Lord" (Acts 14:22).	3. The Church prescribes fasting to the faithful at stated seasons, particularly during Lent. A Catholic Priest is always fasting when he officiates at the altar. He breaks his fast only after he says Mass. When Bishops ordain Priests they are always fasting, as well as the candidates for ordination.	3. Protestants have no law prescribing fasts, though some may fast from private devotion. They even try to ridicule fasting. Neither candidates for ordination, nor the ministers who ordain them, are ever required to fast on such occasions.
4. St. Peter and St. John *confirmed* the newly baptized in Samaria. "They laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:17).	4. Every Catholic Bishop, as a successor of the Apostles, likewise imposes hands on baptized persons in the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which they receive the Holy Ghost.	4. No denomination performs the ceremony of imposing hands except Episcopalians, and even they do not recognize Confirmation as a Sacrament.
5. Our Saviour and His Apostles taught that the *Eucharist* is the Body and Blood of Christ: "Take and eat; this is my body . . . All of you drink of this, for this is my blood" (Matt. 26:28). "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the sharing of the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Cor. 10:16).	5. The Catholic Church teaches, with our Lord and His Apostles, that the Eucharist is truly and indeed the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.	5. The Protestant churches condemn the doctrine of the Real Presence as idolatrous, and say that, in partaking of the communion, we receive only a *memorial* of Christ.
6. The Apostles were empowered by our Saviour to *forgive sins*: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them" (John 20:23). "God," says St. Paul, "hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 7:10, 11).	6. The Bishops and Priests of the Catholic Church, as the inheritors of Apostolic prerogatives, profess to exercise the ministry of reconciliation, and to forgive sins in the name of Christ.	6. Protestants affirm on the contrary, that God delegates to no man the power of pardoning sin.
7. Regarding the *sick*, St. James gave this instruction: "Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).	7. One of the most ordinary duties of a Catholic Priest is to anoint the sick in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. If a man is sick among us he is careful to call in the Priest of the Church that he may anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.	7. No such sacrament as that of anointing the sick is practiced by any Protestant denomination, notwithstanding the Apostle's injunction.
8. Of *marriage* our Saviour said: "Whoever puts away his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if the wife puts away her husband, and marries another, she commits adultery" (Mark 10:11, 12). And again St. Paul said: "To those who are married, not I, but the Lord commands that a wife is not to depart from her husband, and if she departs, that she is to remain unmarried . . . And let not a husband put away his wife" (1 Cor. 7:10, 11).	8. Literally following the Apostle's injunction, the Catholic Church forbids the husband and wife to separate from one another; or, if they separate, neither of them can marry again during the life of the other.	8. The Protestant churches, as is well known, have so far relaxed this law of the Gospel as to allow divorced persons to remarry, during the lifetime of those they have divorced.
9. Our Lord recommended not only by word but by His example, to souls aiming at perfection, the state of perpetual *chastity*. St. Paul also exhorted the Corinthians by counsel and his own example to the same angelic virtue: "He who gives his virgin in marriage does well, and he who does not give her does better" (1 Cor. 7:38).	9. Like the Apostle and his Master, the Catholic clergy bind themselves to a life of perpetual chastity. The members of our religious communities for men and women voluntarily consecrate their chastity to God.	9. All the ministers of other denominations are permitted to marry. And far from inculcating the Apostolic counsel of celibacy to any of their flock, they more than insinuate that the virtue of perpetual chastity, though recommended by St. Paul, is impracticable.

48. The Apostles: First Bishops of the Church

To whom did Christ give the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the members of His Church?—Christ gave the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the members of His Church to the Apostles, the first bishops of the Church.

1. ***St. Peter*** was the first Head. After a miraculous escape from prison in Jerusalem, he founded his See in Antioch; here the followers of Christ were first called *Christians*. Peter made frequent missionary journeys through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Asia Minor, and probably even Greece. He finally fixed his See at Rome.

St. Peter presided at the Council of the Apostles in Jerusalem in the year 50 A. D. At the same time that St. Paul was beheaded, St. Peter was crucified head downwards, on Vatican Hill, Rome, 67 A. D.

2. ***St. John,*** the Beloved Disciple, lived at Ephesus and governed the Church in Asia Minor.

In the time of Trajan he was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, but was miraculously preserved. Later he was banished to Patmos, where he had the revelations which we call the Apocalypse. He died at the age of about 100 years, the last of the Apostles, and the only one who did not die a martyr's death. He left his Gospel and Epistles.

3. ***St. James the Greater,*** St. John's brother, labored in Judea, and according to tradition, travelled as far as Spain.

He was the first of the Apostles to be martyred, being beheaded in Jerusalem in the year 44, by Herod Agrippa.

4. ***St. Matthew*** preached among the Ethiopians, Persians, and Parthians, and was martyred in Parthia. He wrote the first of the four Gospels.

St. James the Less was Bishop of Jerusalem. He was cast down from the pinnacle of the Temple in 63 A. D. He left one Epistle.

St. Andrew, St. Peter's brother, preached along the lower Danube, and was crucified in Greece.

St. Thomas preached in Persia, Medea, and went as far as India. He was martyred in India, pierced with a lance at the command of the king.

St. Philip preached in Phrygia and Scythia, and was crucified at Hieropolis.

St. Bartholomew preached in India, Arabia, and Assyria. He was flayed and crucified in Armenia.

St. Simon preached in North Africa, and was martyred in Persia.

St. Jude preached in Syria, and was martyred in Persia. He wrote the "Catholic Epistle".

St. Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas, preached in Ethiopia, and was martyred in Sebastopolis.

5. ***St. Paul*** was converted miraculously (Acts 9) in the year 34. He of all the Apostles labored the most abundantly. He wrote many Epistles.

He is called the Apostle of the Gentiles, because he carried the Gospel to the pagan world. He travelled extensively and successively to Seleucia, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Phrygia, Galatia, Macedonia, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Miletus, and finally Rome. From Rome he went to Spain and the East, then returned to Rome, where he was martyred in 67 A. D.

Did Christ intend that this power should be exercised by the Apostles alone?—No, Christ intended that this power should be exercised also by their successors, the bishops of the Church.

1. The Apostles first preached in Judea on the very first Christian Pentecost. Then they *dispersed* throughout the different countries of the then known world. Everywhere they preached, baptized, and ruled the Christian communities. They were the first bishops of the Church.

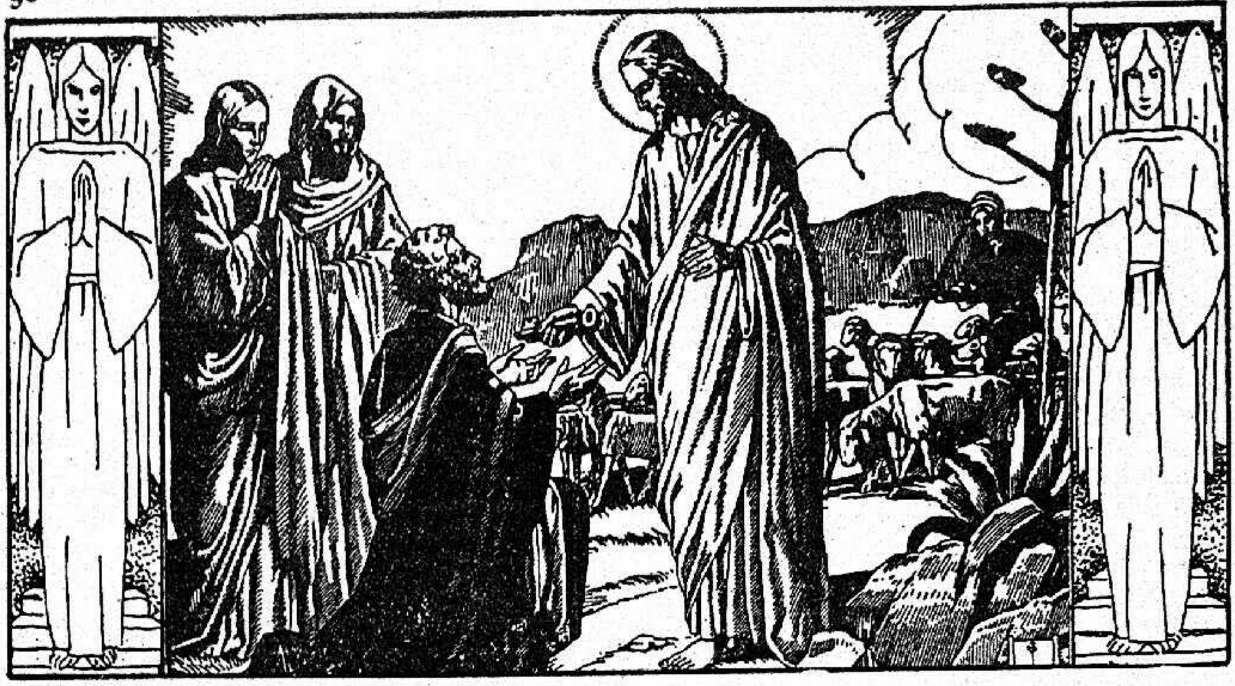
"As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

2. The Apostles chose men to assist them, imparting to them *greater* or *less* powers. Before leaving a place, they chose a successor with full powers (Acts 14:22).

Those who received only a small part of the powers of the Apostles were called *deacons*. Those given greater power were the *priests*. Those appointed successors to rule in the place of the Apostles were the *bishops*.

3. Christ had given the Apostles full powers to choose *successors,* when He gave them the powers His Father had given Him (John 20:21).

It was His wish that the Apostles should have successors to continue the Church, which He said would last till the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). Without successors to the Apostles, the Church would have no rulers, and being unorganized would never have lasted.



When Our Lord said to Peter, "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," He clearly meant: "I will give you supreme authority over My Church. You shall be My representative."

The true test of loyalty to Christ is not only to believe in Him and worship Him, but to honor and obey the representatives He has chosen. Our Lord chose St. Peter as His Vicar.

It is rebellion against Christ to say to Him: "I will worship You, but I will not recognize Your representative." This is what Christians do, who deny the authority of the successor of Peter.

49. The Primacy of Peter

Did Christ give special power in His Church to any one of the Apostles?—Christ gave special power in His Church to Peter, by making him the head of the Apostles and the chief teacher and ruler of the entire Church.

1. When *Simon,* led by his brother Andrew, first met Christ, Our Lord said to him: "Thou art Simon, the son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas" (John 1:42).

Christ spoke in Aramaic, and the original Cephas, or "Kepha" means stone or rock, which we interpret **Peter.** Our Lord must have some special purpose for having Simon's name changed, particularly as the word *Kepha* was never used as a proper name then.

2. When, at Caesarea Philippi, Peter made the memorable confession of faith in the name of the Apostles: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," Christ *promised* to make Peter the head of His Church (Matt. 16:17-20).

In reply Our Lord said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to thee, but my Father in heaven. And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

(a) Our Lord changed Simon's *name* to Peter, which means Rock.

He said that He would make Peter the Rock on which His Church should be founded. As the foundation of a building holds up, supports, and preserves the building, so Peter was to hold the same office for Christ's Church.

(b) Our Lord promised to Peter *the keys* of the kingdom of heaven. In ancient as well as modern times, keys are a symbol of authority. He who lawfully carries the key to a building has the right himself of entering and of admitting or excluding others.

Our Lord said to all the Apostles, "Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:23). But to *Peter alone* did Our Lord address these words: "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

3. Christ, after the Resurrection, fulfilled His promise, and *appointed* Peter head of the Church (John 21:15-17).

On the Lake of Gennesareth, "Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, dost thou love me more than these do?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." He said to him, *"Feed my lambs."* He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." A third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him for the third time, "Dost thou love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." He said to him, *"Feed my sheep."*

By this Christ entrusted to Peter the whole flock, thus making him the head shepherd. The "lambs" (the weak and tender portion of the flock) are the faithful, and the "sheep" (those that nourish the lambs) are the pastors, bishops and priests.

The sheep of Christ are those who submit to Him, the Good Shepherd (John 10:14). Never did Christ say to any other Apostle: Feed My whole flock. As the shepherd is responsible for the flock, he is given authority comparable to his responsibility.

4. Christ also conferred on Peter *special marks* of distinction not conferred on the other Apostles. He gave him a new name. He chose him as a companion on the most solemn occasions. After the Resurrection, He appeared to Peter first, before showing Himself to the other Apostles.

The Lord said: "Simon . . . I have prayed for thee that thy faith may not fail; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32).

5. As with every well-regulated society, the Church needed a visible head; Christ appointed St. Peter *visible head* of the Church. The city has its mayor, the state its governor, the nation its President. At the head of every government is a president or king. Even in the family, the father is the head. Every corporation has a head.

The Church is a *visible society;* that is, it is composed of human beings. It needs a head as well as any other organization. Christ is always its invisible Head, but it needs a visible head to take His place among men.

Did Peter actually exercise his primacy?—Yes, Peter actually exercised his primacy, and the other Apostles and the disciples recognized him as the head of the Church.

1. Peter's name always stands *first* in the lists of Apostles; Iscariot's is always last.

St. Matthew even calls Peter the "first Apostle." But he was neither first in age nor in election, for Our Lord had called Andrew, his elder brother, before him. He must therefore have been first in honor and authority.

2. It was Peter that *proposed* the election of another to take the place of Judas.

In obedience to Peter's advice, the Apostles put forward two among the disciples to choose from; and after praying, they chose Matthias (Acts 1:21-26).

3. It was Peter that preached the first *sermon* on the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Ghost had descended on the Apostles; they spoke so that each person present (and there were many nationalities in the crowd) heard his own language being spoken. The people were amazed; and Peter spoke (Acts 2:14-36).

4. It was Peter that admitted the first *converts* from Judaism (Acts 2:38-41), as well as from paganism (Acts 10:5 ss).

"And he (Peter) ordered them (the Gentiles) baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48). This was a thing unheard of, that the Jews, "of the Faith", should consort with "heathen"; but Peter broke all bonds.

5. Peter worked the first *miracle*.

He gave a man lame from birth the power to walk (Acts 3:6-8).

6. Peter meted out the first *punishment.*

Ananias (and later his wife Sapphira) had lied and cheated; and having been rebuked by Peter, fell down dead (Acts 5:1-6).

7. Peter *cast out* the heretic Simon Magus.

This heretic had wanted to purchase the power of the Apostles of bringing down the Holy Ghost on those on whom they laid hands (Acts 8:19-20).

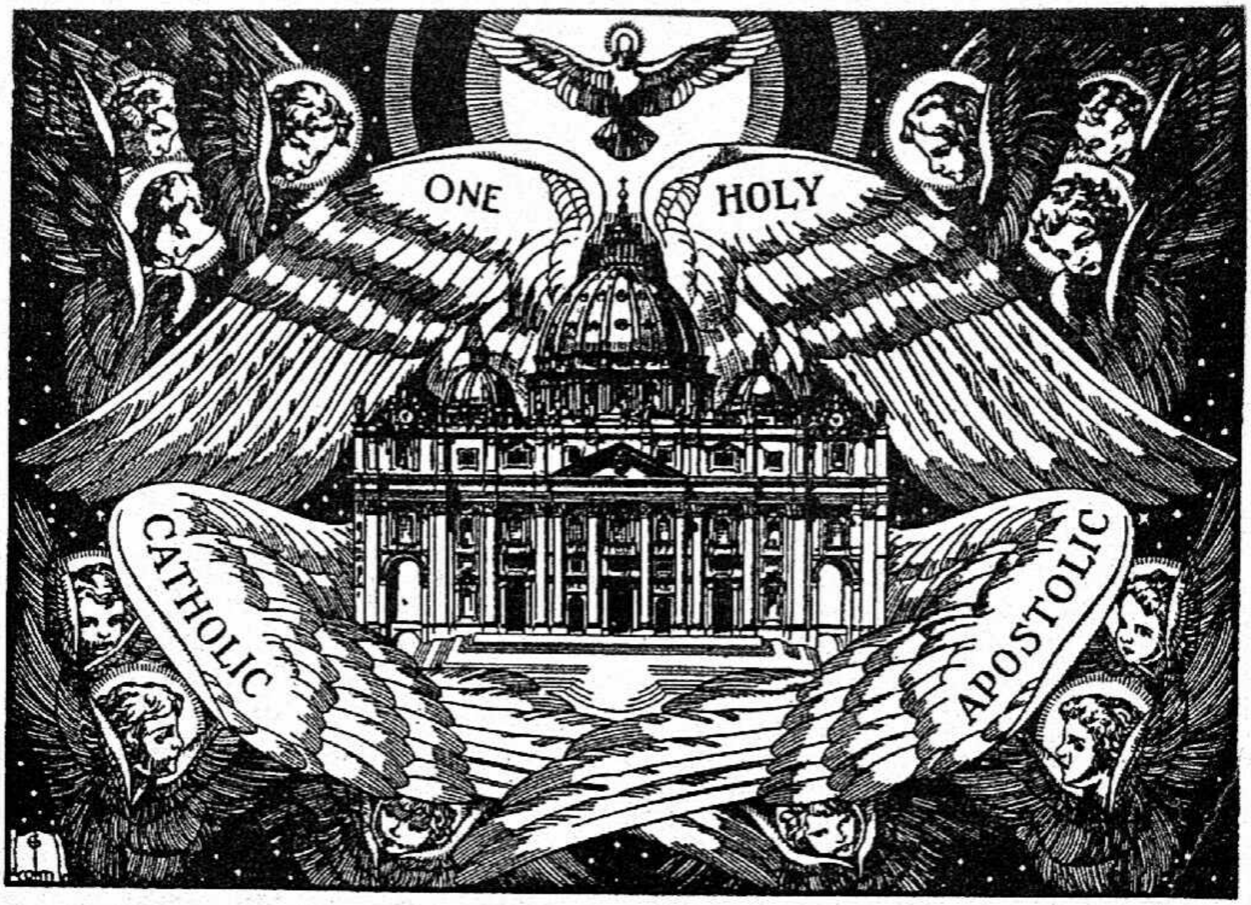
8. Peter made the *first visitation* of the churches (Acts 31-32).

9. In the first Council at Jerusalem, there was much disputing, but when Peter spoke, all *submitted* (Acts 15:7-12).

"After a long debate, Peter got up and said, . . . 'But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus' . . . Then the whole meeting quieted down" (Acts 15:7, 11-12).

10. After his conversion, *St. Paul* presented himself to Peter (Gal. 1:18).

11. Of the early churches established by the Apostles, the Church of Rome was the highest in rank. It was the ***See of Peter.***



The True Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The Church that possesses all the shining marks which Our Lord gave is the Church of God, the True Church. Any church that lacks even one of these marks is an imitation, a false church, and not the one founded by Our Lord. The True Church must possess all these marks. It is the Church which Christ commanded all to hear and obey.

50. Marks of the True Church

Did Christ establish many Churches?—Christ established only one Church, to continue till the end of time.

1. As God is one, He established *one Church,* which He commanded all men to obey and to follow in the way of salvation.

God is essentially one. He is Truth itself. How can He say to one group of men that there are three Persons in one God, and to another that there is only one Person? How can He say to one body that the Holy Eucharist is Himself, and to another that It is mere bread? *God cannot contradict Himself.* "He who hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16). "There shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

2. Christ never referred to His Churches, but to His *Church.* Christ chose *only one Head* for His Church. Peter could not have been the Head of conflicting churches.

Christ said: "And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Christ did *not* say: "Upon this rock I will build My Churches." It was clearly not His intention to establish various conflicting churches.

3. Christ, even in His prayers, spoke of *unity* among His followers. There would evidently be no unity if He had founded many churches.

Immediately before His passion, He prayed: "Yet not for these only do I pray, but for those also who through their word are to believe in me, that all may be one, even as thou, Father, in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21).

Is there any way by which we can distinguish the Church that Christ founded

from all other churches?—We can distinguish the Church founded by Christ from all other churches by the marks or signs that Our Lord gave to it.

A *mark* is a sign by which something may be distinguished from all others of the same kind. By its marks we can recognize the True Church as the one founded by Jesus Christ, distinguishing it from all other churches, however similar.

1. It is important that we know which is the Church established by Christ, in order that we may *obey* it, as God commands. Then shall we also be certain what to believe and do in order to be saved; the Church, that True Church, will be our guide to heaven.

We must distinguish the True Church from false churches, because today there are *many* imitations of the Church founded by Christ.

2. The True Church must be that which Christ *personally founded,* and the Apostles propagated. It must have existed continuously since the time of Christ. It must teach in their entirety *all the doctrines* commanded by the Divine Founder while He was still on earth; and all its members must profess those fundamental doctrines. It must be a *visible organization,* discernible and discoverable, evidently existing, with clear marks or signs distinguishing it as the True Church.

It was through a common bond of faith that the faithful throughout the world were to be united in one body, the Church, their heritage from the Son of God. Our Lord therefore before His Ascension made the necessary provision so that all men might from thenceforth *recognize* the Church which He established, and which He commanded all to join.

What are the chief marks of the True Church? – The chief marks of the True Church are four: It is one, holy, catholic or universal, and apostolic.

1. Christ intended His Church to be One; therefore the True Church must be ***One.*** Its members must be *united* in doctrine, in worship, and in government. Christ said:

"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand" (Mark 3:24). "There shall be one fold and one Shepherd" (John 10:16).

2. Christ intended His Church to be Holy; therefore the True Church must be ***Holy.*** It must teach a *holy doctrine* in faith and morals, because its Founder is holy. It must provide the means for its members to lead a holy life.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. . . . Therefore, by their fruits you will know them" (Matt. 7:15-17, 20).

Christ promised His Church the gift of miracles, a sign of holiness: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do he also shall do, and greater than these he shall do" (John 14:12). He said: "You therefore are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

3. Christ intended His Church to be universal, that is, catholic; and therefore the True Church must be Universal, or ***Catholic.*** It must be for all peoples of every nation and for all times and teach the same faith *everywhere.* Christ commanded His disciples:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). "Go into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). "You shall be witnesses for me . . . even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

4. Christ intended His Church to be propagated by His Apostles; and therefore the True Church must be ***Apostolic.*** It must be the Church propagated by the Apostles. Its rulers must derive their office and authority by lawful succession from the Apostles. It must hold intact the *doctrine* and traditions of the Apostles, to whom Christ gave authority to teach.

It was Christ Himself, and no one else, Who chose His Apostles and disciples, and commanded them to teach His doctrines to all the world. St. Paul says: "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a Gospel to you other than that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8). St. Paul himself refers to the Church as "built upon the foundation of the Apostles" (Eph. 2:20).

Which Church possesses the marks of the Church established by Christ, and therefore must be the True Church?—The Catholic Church possesses the marks of the Church established by Christ; the ***Catholic Church*** is the True Church.

The Catholic Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic in the way Our Lord Jesus Christ wanted His Church to be One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

Principal Christian Religious Bodies in the United States

NAME	PLACE OF ORIGIN	FOUNDER	YEAR
CATHOLIC CHURCH	JERUSALEM	JESUS CHRIST	33
East Orthodox (12 bodies)	Near East	Schism from Catholic Church	1054
Lutheran (21 bodies)	Germany	Martin Luther	1517
Mennonite (16 bodies)	Switzerland	Grebel, Mantz, Blaurock	1525
Episcopal or Anglican	England	Henry VIII	1534
Presbyterian (10 bodies)	Scotland	John Knox	1560
Congregationalist	England	Robert Browne	1583
Baptist (24 bodies)	Amsterdam	John Smyth	1600
Unitarian	London	John Biddle	1645
Quakers (9 bodies)	England	George Fox	1647
Reformed Churches (3 bodies)	Holland	Assembly	17th c.
Baptist, German (4 bodies)	Germany	A. Mack	1708
Methodist (21 bodies)	England	John and Charles Wesley	1739
Universalists	New Jersey	John Murray	1770
United Brethren (2 bodies)	Maryland	Otterbein and Boehm	1800
Evangelical	Pennsylvania	Jacob Albright	1803
Campbellites	Kentucky	Thos. and Alex. Campbell	1827
Latter-Day Saints (7 bodies)	New York	Joseph Smith	1830
Adventist (5 bodies)	New York	William Miller	1831
Salvation Army	England	William Booth	1865
Christian Scientists	Massachusetts	Mary Baker Eddy	1879
Assemblies of God	Arkansas	General Meeting	1914
Church of the Nazarene	U. S.	Union at General Assembly	1919
Evangelical, Reformed	Ohio	Union at General Assembly	1934

There are over 200 different Protestant bodies existing in the United States alone. In the above list a few of the best-known are enumerated, in comparison with the Catholic Church. This comparative list indicates this fact: none of these denominations can ever become the True Church founded by Christ, Son of God.

It is well known that many heretics, at the hour of death, return to the Catholic Church. But what Catholic at that hour has ever denied his religion to seek admission into a sect? As the heretic Melancthon wrote to his Catholic mother: *"The Protestant is the best faith to live in, but the Catholic Faith is the best one to die in."*

51. The One True Church

What is the Church?—The Church is the congregation of all baptized persons united in the same true faith, the same sacrifice, and the same sacraments, under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff and the bishops in communion with him.

1. Even considering it only as a visible society, the Church is a *perfect* religious *body*.

All members are subject to the same religious authority, possess identical religious doctrines, live a common religious life, and use the same means of grace, the sacraments.

2. The Church is divided into the *"teaching Church"* and the *"hearing Church"*; for each Christ laid down powers and duties.

The priests, with their bishops and the Pope, compose the "teaching Church"; the faithful, who believe and obey, and are admitted into membership through the Sacrament of Baptism, compose the "hearing Church".

How is the Church enabled to lead men to salvation?—The Church is enabled to lead men to salvation by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, who gives it life.

1. God the Father and God the Son sent the Holy Ghost to dwell in the Church. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost *enables* the Church to teach, to sanctify, and to rule the faithful in the name of Christ.

The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles to enlighten, strengthen, and sanctify them, so that they could preach the Gospel and spread the Church all over the world. On the Feast of Pentecost, in remembrance of God the Holy Ghost, we celebrate a mystery which is forever renewed in the Church and in our souls: the mystery of the indwelling of God, the reign of the law of love which succeeded the law of bondage and fear (Rom. 8:15).

2. The Holy Ghost *guides the rulers* of the Church, especially the Pope, and helps them in their duties.

Before the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles had been timid and afraid. After His coming they went forth to teach, whatever hardships came; they remembered and understood all the teaching of Christ.

3. The Holy Ghost *preserves the Church* from all error in its teaching; in times of danger, He raises up able defenders of its doctrines.

St. Athanasius defended the Church in the time of the Arian heretics; Pope Gregory VII, during a period of great disorder; St. Dominic, during the time of the Albigenses; and St. Ignatius of Loyola, after the Protestant outbreak.

4. The Holy Ghost *raises up Saints* in the Church throughout all generations.

The members of the Church strive to imitate its Divine Founder, and in all countries and all times it has produced saints, canonized and uncanonized, martyrs, confessors, hidden souls that burn with the love of God and their fellowmen.

Are not all religions the same?—No; for truth and error are not the same; faith and unbelief are not the same.

1. God is not divided. He revealed *only one* religion. We either believe that religion, or do not believe it. There is no middle way. "*He who is not with me is against me*" (Matt. 12:30).

Anything that is not the *whole* truth is not truth. Christ said: "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but through me" (John 14:6).

No one will assert that glass is as good as diamonds, nor that brass is as good as gold. No one claims that an imitation is just as good as the authentic thing. More unreasonable then would it be to claim that a religion established by a man is as good as that founded by the Incarnate God.

2. From the very beginning of mankind there has been *one true religion.* From Adam to the coming of Christ this religion was preserved by the patriarchs, prophets, and others chosen by God to keep the knowledge of the promised Redeemer intact.

Before the coming of Christ, this true religion was not universal, but limited to one people, the Jews, the "chosen people." All other nations had degenerated and worshipped idols, false gods. In spite of the imperfections of the old religion preserved among the Jews, it was always the true religion, the *one* true religion. It forshadowed the coming of the perfect religion, that established by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who then abrogated the Jewish Faith, the Old Law, in favor of the New Faith, the New Law.

3. It is *absurd* to suppose that God does not care whether men denounce His Son as an impostor and blasphemer, or worship Him as God.

Why should Christ, and after Him the Apostles, and after them a long line of believers, have suffered so much and resisted persecution so firmly, if it were of no importance what a man believed? The Apostle said, "There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

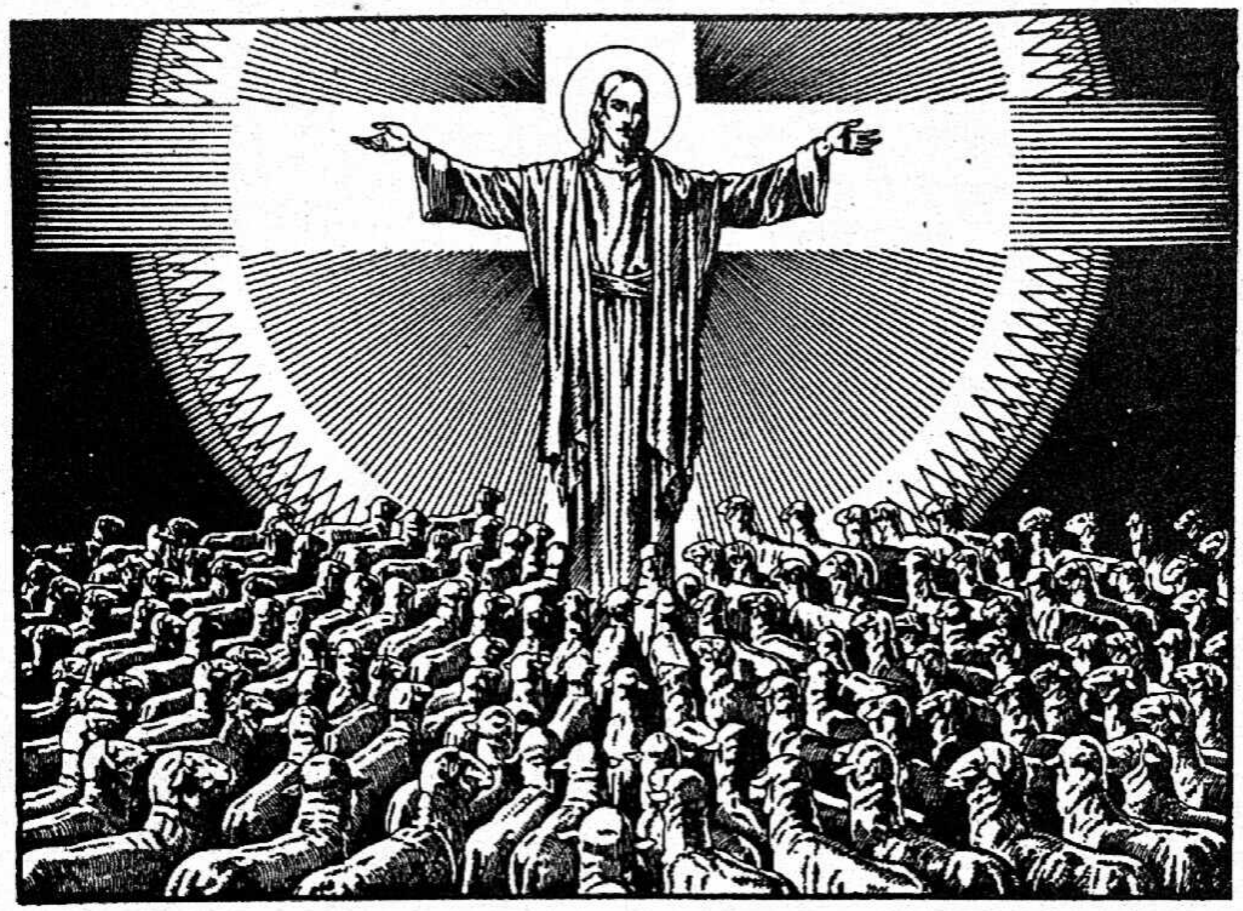
How can we prove that the only true Church of Christ is the Catholic Church?—We can prove that the only true Church of Christ is the Catholic Church, because:

1. *Only* the Catholic Church possesses the marks of the Church established by Christ; that is, unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity. (*See page* 147.)

As a matter of fact, only the Catholic Church *claims* to have all these four marks of the True Church, the marks so evidently set by Christ.

2. The *history* of the Catholic Church gives evidence of miraculous strength, permanence, and unchangeableness, so showing the world that it is under the special protection of God. The Catholic Church has proved itself indestructible for *almost two thousand years,* against every variety and number of formidable enemies. The Church suffered from persecution and outside attacks, and from schism and heresy within its own ranks, yet still lives.

In spite of corruption and persecution, in spite of the combined forces of error and evil, the Catholic Church has continued to live and to carry out its purpose, as its Founder promised. The indestructibility of the Church, as has been proved *by history,* is alone enough to mark it as divine. God alone could have preserved it so long. The Church is the only institution which has proved itself ***an exception to the law of decay and death.*** It has watched the birth and decay of every government on earth for almost 2000 years. After every attack against it, it rises, ***the Bride of Christ,*** ever fresh and fair.



The Catholic Church is One, because it has one Divine Founder, God Himself, Who cannot be divided. All its members hear and obey the voice of their Shepherd.

The Catholic Church is Holy, because it imitates its Holy Founder, the Incarnate Son of God. Its members strive for holiness, aided by divine sacraments instituted by Christ Himself.

52. The Catholic Church: Unity and Holiness

Why is the Catholic Church one?—The Catholic Church is one because all its members, according to the will of Christ, profess the same faith, have the same sacrifice and sacraments, and are united under one and the same visible head, the Pope.

1. They have *unity* in doctrine, worship, and government. They have "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." There has never been any other society, religion, or government whose members are so closely united.

"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand" (Mark 3:24). "Holy Father, keep in thy name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are" (John 17:11).

2. There are about 425 million Catholics united in *doctrine*. This unity is evident and admitted by all. All Catholics everywhere believe each and every article of faith proclaimed by the Church. Wherever a Catholic goes throughout the world, he will find his home in the Catholic Church. There he will find his brethren in Christ all believing as he does. If he deliberately denies even one article of faith of the Church, he ceases to belong to it.

International Eucharistic Congresses, held in different countries, in different parts of the world, every other year, are a good proof of the unity of the Church. In such Congresses the faithful from all nations,—African, American, Australian, Chinese, English, Filipino, French, German, Indian, Irish, Japanese, Russian, Spaniard,—one and all bow down in adoration of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the most Holy Eucharist.

3. All Catholics today hold the same faith that Catholics *in the past* held.

The same Gospel of peace that Jesus Christ preached in Judea, the same that St. Peter preached in Antioch and Rome, the same that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and the Ephesians, the same that apostles of all nations have been preaching for the last 1900 years, is preached today and taught in the Catholic Church throughout the world, from January to December—"Jesus Christ yesterday, and today, and the same forever" (Heb. 13:8).

4. The Catholic Church is one in *worship*. All members make use of the same Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and receive the same sacraments. Although rites vary, the essentials of worship laid down by Christ form the foundation of all. Certain ceremonies have been appointed by the Church, to show more clearly in outward form the spiritual significance of whatever act is being done, and to increase the devotion of those who are present or take part in the religious acts.

The ritual varies in various places, certain ancient rituals from the early days of the Church being preserved. But in general the Roman ritual, the one followed by the diocese of Rome, is the one followed. The change of ritual does not change the *substance* of the religious act, which is preserved in its entirety.

5. All Catholics are united in *government*.

Everywhere the faithful obey their pastors, the pastors obey the bishops, and the bishops obey the Pope. The Catholic Church is truly "one fold and one Shepherd", its unity standing out unequalled in all history.

Why is the Catholic Church holy?—The Catholic Church is holy because it was founded by Jesus Christ, who is all-holy, and because it teaches, according to the will of Christ, holy doctrines, and provides the means of leading a holy life, thereby giving holy members to every age.

St. Peter called the Christians of his time "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9).

1. The *Founder* of the Catholic Church, Jesus Christ, is holy. The Church exhorts its children to imitate its Divine Founder.

No founder of any other church is as holy as Jesus Christ, Son of God. And among the children of the Church we may mention as examples of holiness the canonized Saints.

2. The Catholic Church teaches the highest and holiest doctrine ever presented to any people, a *standard* of perfection. The same precepts delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, the same warnings uttered by the prophets in Judea, the same sublime lessons taught by Our Lord: these the Church teaches from year to year.

The Church teaches its children to know, love, and serve God, and thus to become saints. It urges on them the truth: "What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matt. 16:26). It exhorts them to *imitate Christ*.

3. The Catholic Church provides powerful *means* for holiness, in prayer and the Sacraments. By the Sacraments a Catholic receives abundant graces. One who is faithful in the reception of the Sacraments will never fail to live a righteous life and die a happy death.

Every Catholic is obliged to say his morning and night prayers, and to resort to prayer in every necessity and temptation, as well as to prayer of thanksgiving. He is required under pain of sin to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

4. The Catholic Church produces holy members in its *saints* and *martyrs*. In every age and country the Church is the Mother of saints, martyrs, confessors, and holy men and women who live in Christ. We do not, however, maintain that all Catholics are holy. Unfortunately, some do not live up to the teachings of the Church; that will be their condemnation.

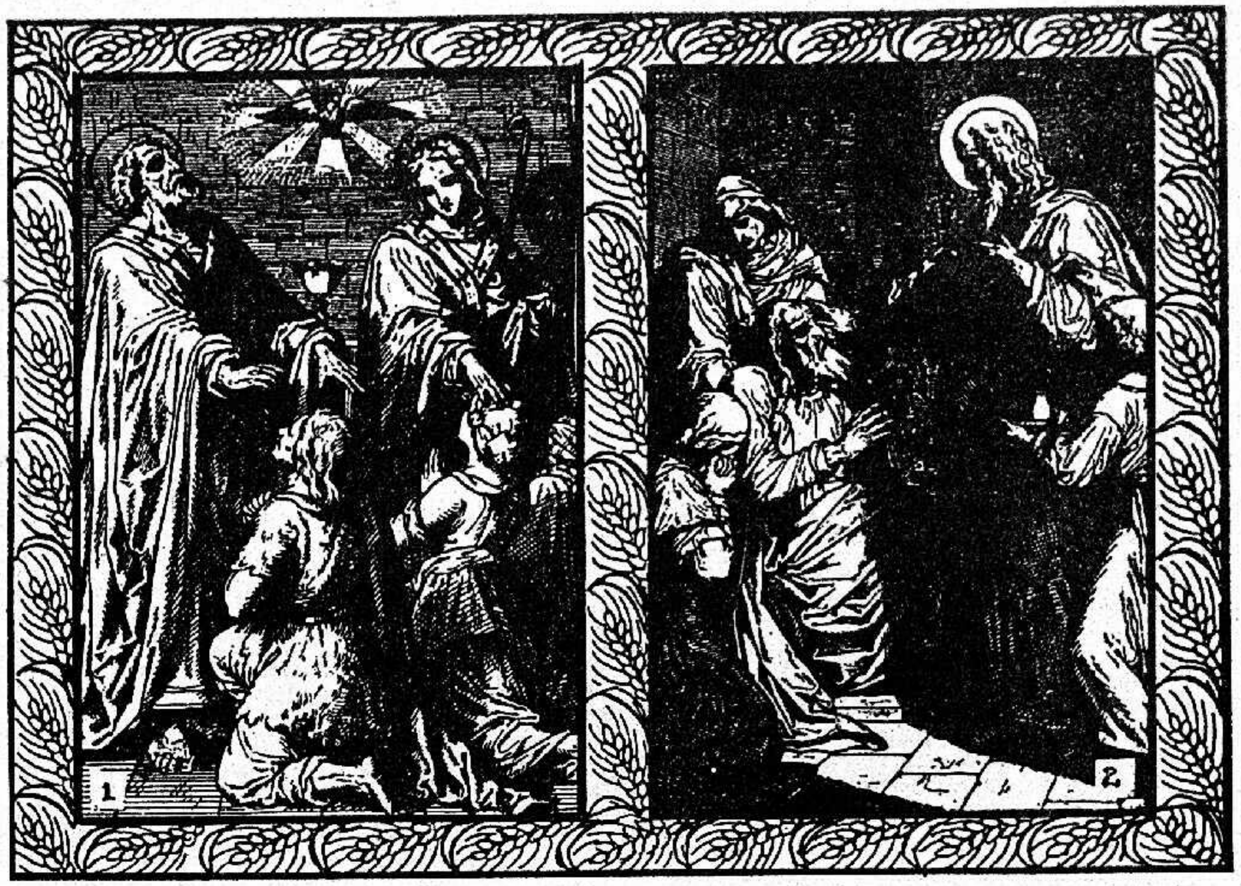
We must remember that even among the Apostles there was one Judas. Our Lord Himself taught in the parable of the wheat and the cockle that the good and the bad will grow up side by side in His Church.

5. The Catholic Church still has the gift of miracles. Christ promised His Church the gift of *miracles*, a sign of holiness. "He who believes in me, the works that I do, he also shall do; and greater than these he shall do" (John 14:12).

Each holy soul proposed for canonization must have worked two miracles before beatification, and two more before canonization. We constantly read of miracles at Lourdes and other shrines. The cures at Lourdes are declared genuine by a board of physicians, many of whom are non-Catholic.

6. The Catholic Church carries on numberless *works of holiness*. It is the great Mother of Mercy and Charity to the helpless.

It instructs children in school, cares for the poor, the sick, the lepers, the deaf, blind, dumb, the old, the orphaned and abandoned. It engages in all kinds of missionary and charitable activity.



The apostolicity of the Church receives additional proof from the fact that today it still administers the very same seven sacraments administered by the Apostles. Non-Catholic churches have abandoned most of the sacraments, but the Catholic Church preserves and administers them all. Among the sacraments thus preserved are (1) Confirmation, and (2) Extreme Unction. St. Peter and St. John administered the first (Acts 8:14-17). St. James wrote about the second (Jas. 5:14, 15).

53. The Catholic Church: Catholicity and Apostolicity

Why is the Church catholic or universal? —The Catholic Church is catholic or universal because, destined to last for all time, it never fails to fulfill the divine commandment to teach all nations all the truths revealed by God.

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

1. The very name of the Church is *Catholic,* that is, *universal.* Even its critics admit that it is catholic. It has existed in all ages since the time of Christ, and teaches *all peoples* of every nation the same faith.

It was St. Ignatius (50-107 A.D.) appointed Bishop of Antioch by Saint Peter, who first used the Greek word *Katholicos,* meaning "universal," when referring to the Church founded by Christ; this he did in order to distinguish the True Church, already being preached throughout the world, from heretical churches that had arisen.

In the fourth century certain sectarians protested against the True Church, yet still called themselves *Christians.* And so Catholics began to call themselves "Catholic." In that same century St. Augustine said: "All heretics wish to call themselves *Catholics;* yet if you ask any of them to direct you to a Catholic church, he will not direct you to his own!"

2. *Wherever* we go, whether in Europe, America, Africa, Asia, or Australia, we shall find the Catholic Church established. Everywhere it teaches the *same doctrines* taught in the United States; everywhere it is ruled by the same Head recognized in the United States: the Pope.

When we say the Church is *Catholic* or universal, we understand that wherever it exists it must have the mark of unity. Otherwise it would not be the same body, but many separate bodies. Some heretical churches have branches in different countries, but they are really different bodies, because they change doctrines under different conditions.

3. The Church everywhere teaches *all the doctrines* that Christ commanded His Apostles to teach.

In the Catholic Church is fulfilled the prophecy of Malachy: "From the rising of the sun to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation; for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 1:11).

4. The True Church must be so organized that it can admit ***all men*** into its communion. This the Catholic Church does. Christ founded the Church for all men, not only for a selected few. He died for all men, and wishes the fruits of His death to do good to all men. At present only the Catholic Church is to be found all over the world, ministering to all races and peoples, to all classes of the population, poor or rich, wise or ignorant, saint or sinner. The Catholic Church is the only *Church for Everyman.*

Most denominations are national; all are localized. For example: in Germany the Kaiser used to be the head of the Lutheran Church; in Russia the Czar used to be head of the Russian Church. The King of England is head of the Anglican Church.

Why is the Catholic Church apostolic? —The Catholic Church is apostolic because it was founded by Christ on the Apostles, and, according to His divine will, has always been governed by their lawful successors.

Apostolicity is easily proved by the *facts of history.* If a church cannot trace back its history lawfully in an unbroken line step by step to the Apostles, it is not the True Church.

1. Pope Pius XII, our present Pope, is the *direct successor* of St. Peter.

He is the lawful successor of the Pope who preceded him; and thus each Pope lawfully succeeded the one before him, until we reach St. Peter, the first Pope, chosen by Christ Himself.

2. All the sees founded by the Apostles perished or were interrupted, *except the See of Peter alone.* Where Peter is, there is the True Church founded by Our Lord.

Those denominations that broke away from the Church thus lost their connection with the Apostles. They were all begun by individuals who could never have had any authority from either Christ or the Apostles. Most of them came some 1500 years too late.

3. Non-Catholic denominations claim that they did not begin new churches, but merely *"reformed"* the old one. In answer we ask, Did the True Church exist at the time of the founding of these new churches, or not?

If it did not, then Christ's promise to be with His Church always had failed; His Church had died, and no human reform could possibly have resurrected it. If it did exist, then those who invented *new doctrines* were not reforming it, but founding new churches.

4. In the same way, the Church derives all its holy orders, doctrines, and mission *from the Apostles.* It is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles," of which Christ is the corner-stone (Eph. 2:20). It holds intact the *doctrine* and traditions of the Apostles, to whom Christ gave authority to teach.

St. Paul says: "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel to you other than that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema!" (Gal. 1:8). A church which at any time denies an apostolic doctrine, discards the sacrament of Holy Orders, or breaks away from obedience to the Pope, ceases to be apostolic. It becomes a dead branch broken off from the parent vine which is Christ Himself: "I am the vine: you are the branches" (John 15:5).

Catholics Do *Not* Believe:

That the Pope is God and can do no wrong;

That anybody or anything may be worshipped or adored besides the True God;

That the Blessed Virgin is equal to God;

That images may be worshipped;

That indulgences give permission to commit sin;

That a Mass can be bought;

That forgiveness of sin can be bought;

That sin can be forgiven without true sorrow;

That scapulars, medals, crucifixes, and other sacramentals can give graces without proper dispositions on the part of the user;

That non-Catholics will all be damned;

That all Catholics will go to heaven;

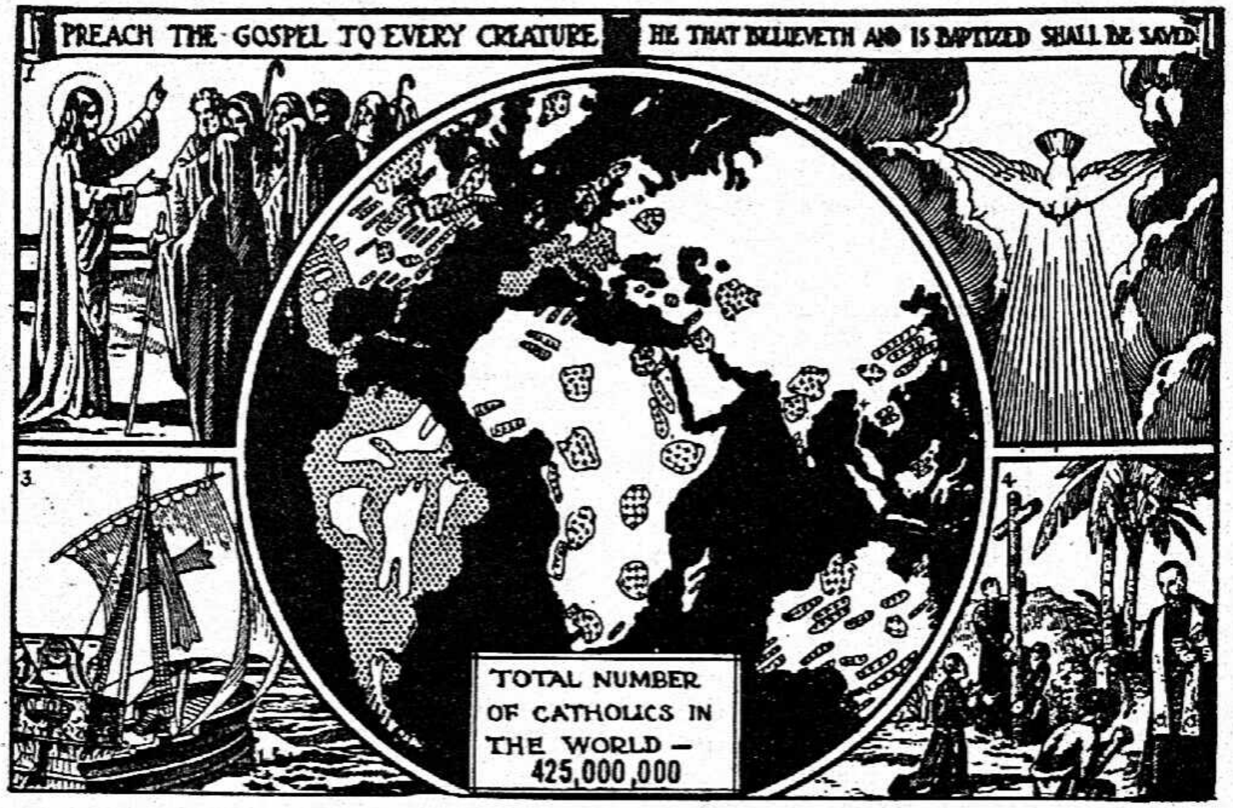
That the Bible is the only rule of faith;

That anybody may interpret the Bible;

That Our Lord Jesus Christ established many Churches;

That outward piety is profitable without charity of the spirit;

That all religions are the same.


PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE
HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED
1
3
4
TOTAL NUMBER OF CATHOLICS IN THE WORLD — 425,000,000

In spite of all kinds of persecutions, the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has continued to spread all over the world. It has obeyed strictly the command of Our Lord to the Apostles: "Go and make disciples of all nations." Everywhere men have listened to its voice, believing the warning of Christ, "He that believeth not shall be condemned."

54. The Living Church

Give a short summary of the history of the Church for the almost two thousand years of its existence.—The following is a brief summary:

1. *The first 400 years.* The Apostles dispersed to different countries in order to carry out Christ's command to teach. The Apostles baptized, preached, and ruled in various countries to which they were sent. They appointed bishops and priests to rule and minister to the faithful.

In spite of sufferings and persecutions they persevered, until finally they sealed their faith by martyrdom. Peter and Paul were especially interested in the conversion of the Roman Empire, the mightiest and also most wicked empire of ancient days.

The morals of the Romans were extremely debased; the evil was spreading from the Imperial City of Rome throughout the vast empire. In Rome alone some 30,000 different "gods" and "goddesses" were worshipped, many of them for their very immorality. So close was the union of the pagan religion and the empire that to attack the religion was to be considered a traitor to Rome. For this reason the full force of the empire was set against the new religion of the Christians. But the Fisherman did not falter: Peter battled with all his might. He and Paul were both martyred; but others rose to continue the battle for Christ, which lasted for nearly 300 years.

Persecution followed upon persecution, numbering ten unsurpassed in ferocity. The severest were those under Nero (64-68) and Diocletian (303-305). The latter condemned to death some two million Christians. But the more they were persecuted, the faster they increased. Tertullian says: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christianity."

At last, in 313 A. D., the banners of Christianity were flung out in victory; peace was granted by the Edict of Milan. Later, Constantine the Great made Christianity the State religion (324 A. D.) He was led to this step when he conquered in battle after seeing in the heavens a luminous cross with the words *In hoc signo vinces* (In this sign thou shalt conquer). His saintly mother, St. Helena, had also a great influence on his conversion.

2. *The second 400 years.* Before sixty years had passed after the Edict of Milan, hordes of barbarian Huns, Goths, Vandals, and Visigoths, numbering millions, started moving from the north into the civilized European countries. City after city surrendered until Rome itself was taken, and the darkness of barbarism covered the continent. But the missionaries and teachers of the Church mingled with the barbarians, returned with them to their countries, and brought light once more out of darkness.

St. Patrick was sent to Ireland, and converted that nation to Christianity. St. Augustine in England and St. Boniface in Germany changed those nations into followers of the cross of Christ. The idol-worshipping Franks followed their king Clovis into the Christian fold. At the end of four centuries, the cruel and savage barbarians of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, England, and Ireland were Christians, civilized, progressive, settled in peaceful cities, building churches, carrying on trade.

3. *The third 400 years.* In the seventh century Mohammed had begun to propagate his doctrines among the Arabian tribes. His was a conversion by the sword: a great part of Asia, North Africa, Spain, and the islands of the Mediterranean were overrun and conquered to Mohammed's Allah. At last Mohammedanism broke into France.

In a memorable nine-day battle in 732 A. D., the French Christians under Charles Martel defeated the Mohammedans at Tours, and thus stopped their incursions into France. But in the next century the Mohammedans entered and sacked Rome itself, even St. Peter's. However, the Church carried on and finally repelled the invader.

The fall of Jerusalem into the hands of the Mohammedans in the eleventh century gave impetus to the Crusades, during which Christian armies went to free the Holy Places from the infidels. There were seven Crusades in all, from 1095 A. D., to 1254 A. D. Among the outstanding leaders we may mention: Godfrey de Bouillon, Frederick Barbarossa, Richard the Lionhearted, and St. Louis of France.

4. *The fourth 400 years.* The Christian rulers of Europe, upon becoming more powerful, began to look with envy on the Pope's authority, and to encroach upon it. Although the Crusades had had good effects, too much interest in material preparations caused a relaxation in spiritual life; heresy often attacked the Church. Berengarius denied the Real Presence; followed the Greek schism, the Albigensian heresy, and the heresies of Wycliff and Huss, who denied the authority of the Church. Finally, in the sixteenth century, the general laxness and spirit of revolt culminated in open defiance against Church authority, and the Protestant Revolt swept Europe.

An Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, in 1517 made an open attack on the doctrine of Indulgences. When he was effectively refuted by Doctor John Eck in a public argument, Luther became enraged, and more active in propagating his errors. Because his doctrines appealed to human vanity and weakness, he attracted many followers. The princes, who envied the papal authority, threw in their lot with Luther. The Bible was declared the only rule of faith, so that no one would any longer be dependent on Church authority, but could interpret the word of God as he pleased for himself. The vicious were readily won over by the doctrine that man cannot prevent sin on account of natural corruption, and the absence of free will.

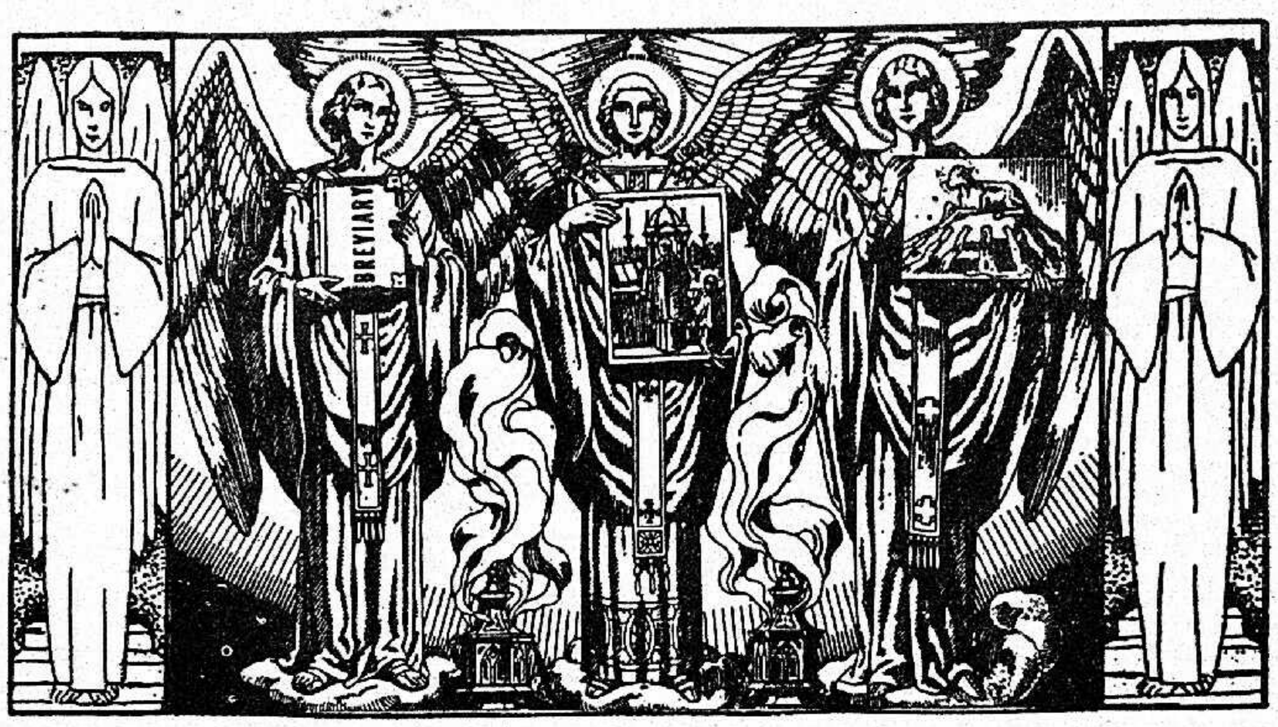
Revolt spread from Germany to other countries. In Switzerland John Calvin followed in Luther's footsteps, and began Calvinism. In Scotland John Knox was the propagator of Protestantism. In England, Henry VIII's desire to change wives was the immediate cause for the establishment of the Anglican Church. Denmark, Holland, Norway, and Sweden were all swept into heresy by their rulers.

But out of the pains of the Protestant revolt, the Church came forth stronger and purified. In the meantime, *newly discovered* countries were converted. The Portuguese and Spaniards were the pioneers in this missionary enterprise. The discoveries of new lands, to which Catholic missionaries went, resulted in the gain of more millions for the Church than had been lost in Protestantism.

5. *The last 400 years.* Many in Europe returned to the Church; more were gained in the Americas. Protestantism has continued to attack the Church; the paganism bred from the spirit of laxity and revolt is another enemy. Open warfare goes on in Russia and satellite countries. Still the Church continues to grow, the greatest single religious body in history.

In 1953 missionaries of Mother Church can be found in *the most remote* portions of the globe, working patiently to bring souls to Christ. They go where no other foreigners would go. At present there are about 30,000 priests, 12,000 lay brothers, and 60,000 Sisters working in the foreign missions. The missions are supervised and supported by the Societies for the Propagation of the Faith and the Holy Childhood (*see pages* 394-395)

At present the Church has a membership of about 425,000,000 in all parts of the world. They are under the direction of some 420,000 priests, 2,200 Prelates, and one Head, the Pope. They form the greatest body having a single religious faith. The different Protestant denominations number about two hundred million all together. The schismatic Eastern Christians total about 150 millions.



The essential acts of the Liturgy are three: the prayers of the priesthood in the Divine Office (represented by the first angel), the Mass (represented by the second angel), and the sacraments (represented by the third angel).

The term "rite" is sometimes used to refer to the liturgy according to some definite custom and language. "Rite" may also designate in a narrow sense some particular liturgical ceremony; in this way we have the "rite of Baptism", etc.

55. The Catholic Eastern Church; Rites

What is the Catholic Eastern Church?— It is that part of the Church in the East which, although using liturgies and rites differing from those of the Latin (or Western) Church centered at Rome, subscribe to the same doctrines, and recognize the same Sovereign Pontiff, thus belonging to the same Universal and True Church.

The Catholic Eastern Church includes the following: Byzantines, Syrians, Copts, Ethiopians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Malabarese, and Maronites.

1. At the beginning of the *fourth century* there was one Church, one in doctrine as well as in obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, the Bishop of Rome. Even then, however, there was no uniformity in observances, ceremonies, rites.

Our Lord had sent the Apostles to different parts, and their followers had stuck to the doctrines, but had varied the observances and rites, in accordance with the particular inclinations of the people in the region. The languages used were naturally extremely varied; the Mass was the same Sacrifice instituted by Our Lord (in Aramaic), but it must have been said in quite a variety of languages.

2. Then political dissension within the Roman Empire led to its division into East and West. Religious organization, following *political developments*, led to the separation of first the Greek, then the Russian Orthodox Church. (*See page* 143.)

These schismatical churches denied the authority of the Pope, who lived in the West as Bishop of Rome. Otherwise they continued to practice the True Religion just as Christ and the Apostles had taught. They administered the sacraments, celebrated Mass, and followed other observances.

3. Within the Catholic Eastern Church, only the Maronite Church has never been in schism. With the passing of the centuries, those in schism divided and subdivided. Then, chiefly since the 16th and 17th centuries, most of them *returned to the unity* of the True Church.

The Catholic Eastern Church continues to use different rites and observances, some of which even antedated those of Rome, as having been there long before the schisms. Thus today the groups in the Eastern Church have their own discipline and customs, the most notable of which is that with them Mass (called "Holy Liturgy") is said in the language peculiar to the church in which it is being said: whether Slavonic, Rumanian, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Greek, Coptic, Ethiopic, or Georgian.

Other differences of practice are: administration of the Holy Eucharist to the faithful in both forms of bread and wine, the use of leavened bread for Holy Mass, Baptism by immersion, bowing from the waist with a sweep of the arm instead of a genuflection before the Blessed Sacrament.

4. Groups in the Eastern Church are chiefly those under the jurisdiction of the ***Patriarchs*** of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople. In the fifth century there were five patriarchates: these four composing the Eastern Church, and the Patriarchate of Rome alone in the West.

In those days there were clear-cut geographical divisions of patriarchates; an Eastern Catholic was born within the limits of his patriarchate. Today one belongs to his rite wherever he goes, and his children inherit his rite. In the United States there are two dioceses of Eastern Catholics: one of Philadelphia (Ukranian Greek) to which some 316,800 Catholics belong; and another of Pittsburgh (composed of Russians, Hungars, and Croats), to which some 315,200 Catholics belong. If Canada is included, almost a million among us are of the Eastern Church.

5. The Catholic Eastern Church is a living proof of the universality of the Catholic Church. The *matter* (including the doctrines, faith and morals) is unchanging; but the *manner* (including rubrics and rites, custom and practice, the externals) may change. The Church organization is malleable; but the fundamentals and essentials, the doctrines, are unchanging anywhere.

Thus Catholics under the Patriarchate of Rome in the United States have only six holydays of obligation; the Ukranian Catholic here has to observe twenty holydays of obligation. His Christmas, though also December 25th, falls on our December 7th, because he uses a different calendar. In the Eastern Churches, the married clergy can be found as often as the celibate, because married men can be ordained and retain their wives. If the wife of a married priest dies, he cannot remarry; a bachelor who is ordained cannot marry later. Bishops are required to be either widowers or single.

Unity of religion does not mean uniformity of rite. Even in the Latin Church under the Patriarch of Rome, there are variations, all dating no later than the fourteenth century. As Pope Benedict XIV said: "Eastern Christians should be Catholics; they do not need to become Latins." Externals may vary; but the core is one.

What is liturgy, and what is rite?— Liturgy comprises a public act intended for the worship of God; rite is the manner of observing the act.

At present, however, the two terms are used indiscriminately and interchangeably. Strictly speaking, "liturgy" now refers to the rite of Holy Mass.

1. The *Roman Rite* is for all practical purposes the universal rite used in the Western Church. In it Latin is used.

During the period of persecutions, and on account of the difficulty of communication, variety in practices was the natural and common thing. When the Church became better organized, practices became more uniform. In the Latin Church rites practically became uniform in 1570 with the publication of the Roman Missal; even today a few variations remain.

2. The *Byzantine Rite*, after the Roman, is the most widely-used in the Church, being found in Russia, Greece, the Balkans, and south Italy. Greek is the language principally employed, but Georgian, Slavonic, and Roumanian are likewise used.

The Orthodox Eastern Church belongs to this rite. Originally, it was of Constantinople; it is based on the rite of St. James of Jerusalem, and was reformed by St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. Modified for use in Russia, this Rite is termed *Ruthenian*.

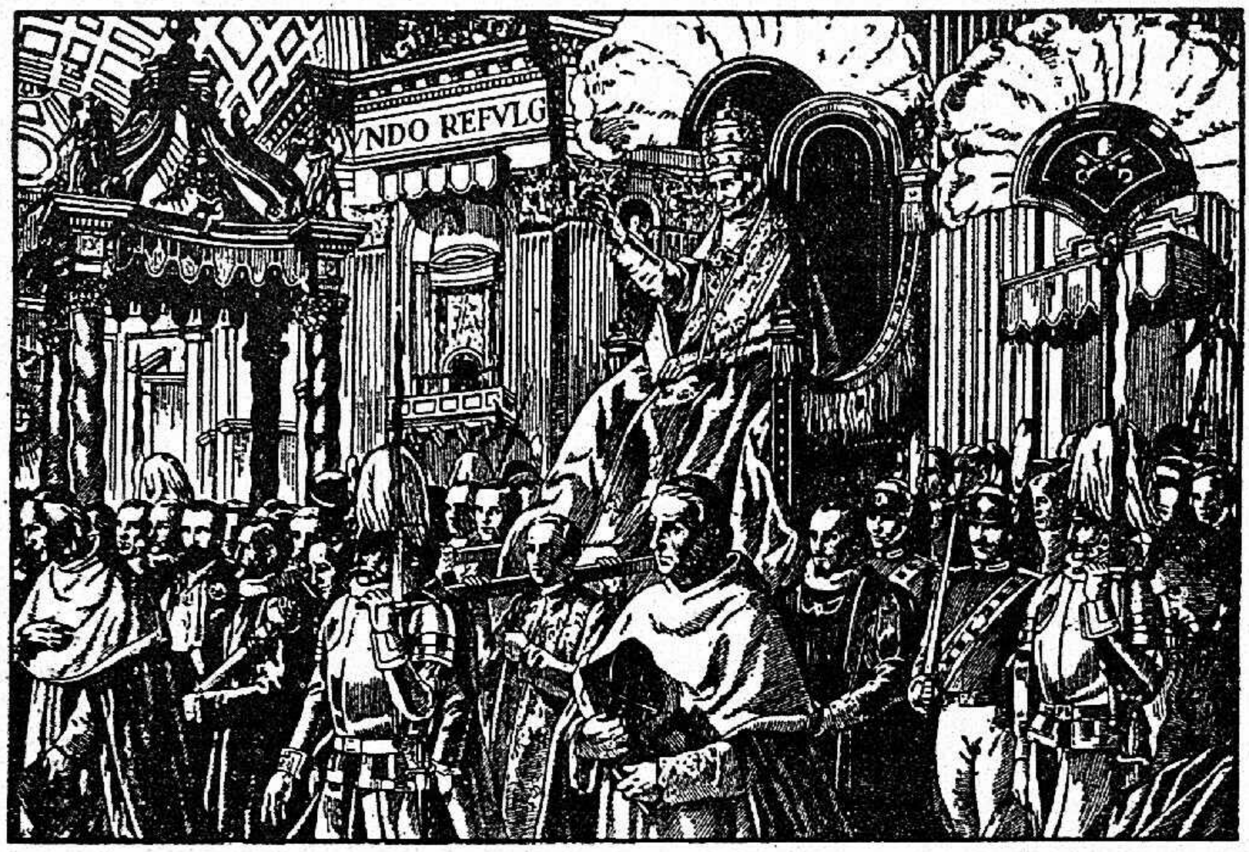
3. Other Asian Rites are: the *Antiochean, Chaldean*, and *Armenian;* in their entirety or modified, they are employed in the East.

The *Antiochean* Rite is the source of many derived rites; it traces its origin to St. James of Jerusalem. The Syrians, Chaldeans, Malabarese, and Maronites use derivations. The *Chaldean* Rite is used by the Chaldeans and Malabarese. Syriac is the principal language used in both these rites. The *Armenian* Rite is in use among Armenians, found in the Levant, Italy, and Austria. The Armenian tongue is used. It is the Greek Liturgy of St. Basil.

4. In African Catholic churches, the principal rite used is the Alexandrian. This is called the "Liturgy of St. Mark"; but the original has been greatly modified. The *Coptic* and *Ethiopian* Churches use it.

The Catholic *Copts* are under the Patriarch of Alexandria, living in Cairo. Old Coptic and Arabic are the languages used in their liturgy. The *Ethiopian* Church uses a version of the Liturgy of St. Mark; it is as a whole the same as that of the Copts.

The ceremonies of these Rites may indeed seem strange to us of the Latin Rite. But the bishops and priests are real bishops and priests, though vested differently; the Mass and Sacraments are genuine, though performed with an unknown ritual. The Church in the East is the same Church in the West, the same founded by Jesus Christ, the One True Catholic Church.



It is Christ's will that we should reverence His ministers as Himself. This is why Catholics pay the greatest reverence to Christ's Vicar, the Pope, their universal Father. On this account the title "His Holiness" is given him. Out of respect for his office, the Holy Father is given privileges not granted to other bishops. As a temporal sovereign he has a Court and guards. He has a standard and seal. He has ambassadors. On solemn occasions he is carried in the papal chair called sedia gestatoria.

56. The Bishop of Rome

Did Christ intend that the special power of chief teacher and ruler of the entire Church should be exercised by Peter alone? — Christ did not intend that the special power of chief teacher and ruler of the entire Church should be exercised by Peter alone, but intended that this power should be passed down to his successor, the Pope, Bishop of Rome, who is the Vicar of Christ on earth, and the visible Head of the Church.

1. St. Peter lived for a short time at Antioch; then he went to Rome and there fixed his official residence *permanently*. It was there, and as Bishop of Rome, that he died as a martyr some twenty years later.

The Church was not to die with Peter. Therefore his official rank and dignity and powers were to be handed on to his successors from generation to generation. In the same way, successors to a civil office acquire all the powers attached to the office.

2. Thus the Bishop of Rome, the lawful successor of St. Peter, is *what Peter was*, Vicar of Christ and visible head of the Church. Christ is the true and invisible Head of the Church. But its visible head is the Bishop of Rome, our Holy Father the Pope, because he is the successor of St. Peter.

No one but the Bishop of Rome has ever *claimed* supreme authority over the whole Church. Therefore, either he is St. Peter's successor, or St. Peter has no successor, and the promise of Christ had failed.

3. The supremacy of the Bishop of Rome over all Christendom has been *disputed* because of the perversity of men and the power of evil. It has been denied by *unruly sons*. The very fact that it was disputed shows that it existed.

In the same way even the authority of God Himself has been questioned; His very existence has been denied. From the beginning, too, parental authority has been defied. The authority of lawful rulers has ever been attacked. The denials, defiance, and attacks have not destroyed the existence of such authority. *Does God die* because men deny His existence? "The fool said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 52).

Has the Bishop of Rome always been looked upon as the head of the Church?— Yes, the Bishop of Rome has from Apostolic times been looked upon as the universal head of the Church.

1. From earliest times the titles "high priest" and "bishop of bishops" have been given to the Bishop of Rome. *Appeals* were made to him, and *disputes* were settled by him.

The third successor of St. Peter was Pope St. Clement. A dispute in the Church at Corinth was referred to him for decision. He wrote letters of remonstrance and admonition to the Corinthians, and they submitted to his correction. At that time, very near Corinth the Apostle John was still living. Why did the Corinthians, instead of appealing to faraway Rome and Clement, not refer their troubles to the Apostle John, Bishop of Ephesus? Evidently because Rome's authority was universal, while that of Ephesus was local.

There were numerous cases of *appeal* throughout the long history of the Church; all were referred to Rome.

In the fifth century when Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus in the East, was deposed, he appealed to Pope Leo, and the Pope ordered him reinstated. The Pope was everywhere recognized as head of the Church not only in the West, but in the East, up to the great schism of the ninth century.

2. With one voice the *Fathers* of the Church pay homage to the Bishop of Rome as their superior.

All of them recognized the Pope as Supreme Head. St. Ambrose said in the fourth century: *"Where Peter is, there is the Church."*

3. General *councils* were not held without the presence of the Bishop of Rome or his representative. No council was accepted as universal or general unless its acts received the approval of the Bishop of Rome.

At the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451, the Pope's letter was read to the assemblage of bishops, and they cried with one voice: "Peter has spoken by Leo; let him be anathema who believes otherwise!" As late as the year 1439, in the council of Florence, the Greeks who wished to return to the Church acknowledged the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope.

4. Every nation *converted from paganism* has received the faith from missionaries specially sent by the Pope, or by bishops acknowledging the Pope as their Head.

St. Patrick was sent by Pope Celestine to Ireland. St. Palladius was sent by the same Pope to Scotland. St. Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory to England. St. Remigius went to France under the protection of the See of Rome. St. Boniface was sent by Pope Gregory II to Germany and Bavaria. And so on.

PONTIFICAL DECORATIONS

The Holy See confers various titles, orders, decorations, and other *honors* on certain persons, usually lay people, who in some special manner have distinguished themselves in furthering the well-being of humanity and of the Church. They are listed here in the order of importance.

The *Supreme Order of Christ* was started by Pope John XXII in 1319. Today it is the supreme pontifical Order of knighthood, conferred only on very rare occasions.

The *Order of the Golden Spur* follows the Order of Christ as a pontifical decoration. It has one class, of 100 knights, and is awarded only to those who have furthered the cause of the Church by outstanding deeds. It is bestowed also to non-Catholics.

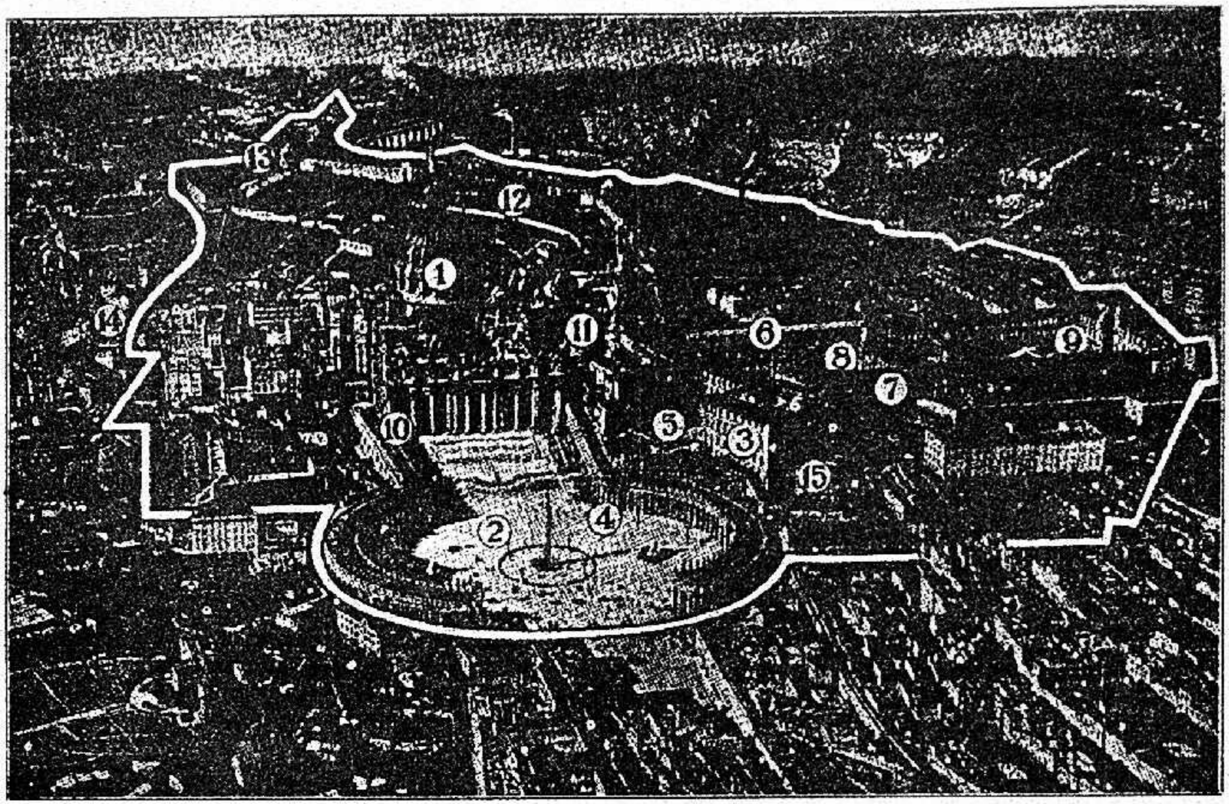
The *Order of Pius IX* has three classes, Knights of the Grand Cross, Commanders, and Knights. It is awarded also to non-Catholics.

The *Order of St. Gregory the Great* was founded by Pope Gregory XVI in 1831. It has two divisions, civil and military, each of which is divided into three classes: Knights of the Grand Cross, Commanders, and Knights.

The *Order of St. Sylvester*, instituted in 1841, like the Order of St. Gregory, has three classes of knights.

The *Order of the Holy Sepulchre* is considered one of the oldest of pontifical honors; it is today highly prized in Europe. It has been bestowed on kings and nobles, on heads of republics, on persons outstanding in arts, letters, and sciences, on those who in special manner have served the Church. Unlike other orders, this is bestowed besides on clerics and women.

The medal *"Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice"* was instituted by Leo XIII, that great "Pope of the Workingman", in 1888. It is awarded in recognition of special services to the Church and the Pope. The *"Benemerenti"* medal was instituted in 1832 by Gregory XVI, of two classes, civil and military, in recognition of outstanding daring or courage.



1. Basilica of St. Peter; 2. Plaza of St. Peter; 3. The Vatican (10,246 rooms); 4. Bronze door; 5. Courtyard of Damascus; 6. Vatican Library; 7. Vatican Museum; 8. Courtyard of Belvedere; 9. Courtyard of Pines; 10. Door leading to Libraries; 11. Sistine Chapel; 12. Vatican Gardens; 13. Observatory; 14. Campo Santo; 15. Quarters of the Swiss Guards. In 1929 Pope Pius XI and King Victor Emmanuel III signed a formal agreement, by which the Pope regained temporal sovereignty over the City of the Vatican. That is the smallest independent state in all Christendom. But in it the Roman Pontiff is supreme, free from all human dictation. Catholics from all over the world at any time, in war or at peace, can have free access to their universal Father, because of this independence.

57. Powers of the Pope

What are the chief powers of the Pope? —The Pope has supreme and complete power and jurisdiction to decide questions of faith and morals and to arrange the discipline of the universal Church.

1. The power of the Pope *extends* over every single church, every single bishop and pastor, every one of the faithful.

He may appoint and depose bishops, call councils, make and unmake laws, send missionaries, confer distinctions, privileges, and dispensations, and reserve sins to his own tribunal.

2. The Pope is the supreme *judge;* to him belongs the last appeal in all cases.

The Pope is the "teacher of all Christians", the "chief shepherd of the shepherds and their flocks". "Peter, standing up with the Eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them . . ." (Acts 2:14). The word "Pope" is derived from the Latin term *papa*, which means "Father".

3. The Pope is *independent* of every temporal sovereign and of every spiritual power. He is responsible only to God.

What is the temporal power of the Pope? —The temporal power of the Pope is his power to rule an independent state as sovereign, free and independent from other earthly sovereigns.

The vastness of the Church and the greatness of its responsibilities towards its millions of members require that it should be able to communicate with them unhampered by any national government, free of foreign interference.

1. When Constantine the Great was converted at the beginning of the fourth century, he *gave* large grants of money and

lands to the Church. Emperors who succeeded him added to the grants.

In the year 327 Constantine moved the seat of his Empire to Constantinople. Rome was abandoned to itself, and became the prey of successive hordes of barbarians. The Roman people came to look up to the Popes as their only governors and protectors. In fact it was Pope Leo the Great who saved Rome from Attila the "Scourge of God", and from Genseric the Vandal. Thus abandoned by the emperors, little by little the people of central Italy became bound more strongly to the Popes.

2. In 754 the Lombards invaded Italy and threatened Rome. The Pope appealed urgently to the Emperor in Constantinople, but he was indifferent, neglectful, and did nothing.

In this emergency, the Pope crossed the Alps and appealed to Pepin, the Frankish king, to protect the people in Italy from the Lombards. Upon defeating the Lombards, King Pepin granted the conquered provinces to the Pope. In 774 Charlemagne, the successor of Pepin, confirmed the grant, and donated additional provinces to the Pope. These possessions, called the *States of the Church*, the Popes held 'till 1859.

3. In 1859 all the States of the Church, except Rome, were seized by the armies of Victor Emmanuel II, leader of the movement for the unification of Italy.

In 1870 Rome itself was taken, and made capital of Italy, and the Pope became virtually a prisoner in his own palace.

4. In 1929 the *Lateran Treaty* signed between the Holy See and the crown of Italy recognized the Pope's temporal power and his sovereignty over the City of the Vatican, by a formal concordat between the Pope and the crown of Italy.

The City of the Vatican is the smallest sovereign state in the world. At the time of the signing of the Lateran Treaty, it had a population of 532, only 250 of whom were resident. It is almost entirely enclosed by high walls, and comprises 110 acres.

What exclusive privileges does the Bishop of Rome enjoy, to signify his supremacy as Head of the Church?— The Bishop of Rome enjoys the following exclusive privileges:

1. He has *precedence* of jurisdiction and honor over all other bishops.

The Bishop of Rome's jurisdiction extends over all Christendom. He is first in both authority and honor.

2. He enjoys the exclusive *titles* of: Pope, Sovereign Pontiff, Roman Pontiff, Holy Father, His Holiness, Vicar of Christ, Father of Christendom. But he calls himself the "Servant of the Servants of God."

Because of the words of Our Lord to Peter: "Blessed art thou," we address the Pope *Beatissime Pater* (Most Holy Father). The office is called the See of Peter, Holy See, or Apostolic See, or the Chair of Peter. The Pope is called from his see, the Pope of Rome, and the Catholic Church under him is often called the Roman Catholic Church.

3. He assumes a *new name* upon his election, as St. Peter was given a new name by Our Lord. From the tenth century, it has been the custom to choose the name from those of previous Popes, St. Peter's being excepted out of reverence.

He wears the *tiara*, a triple crown, the symbol of his preeminence in the threefold office of Teacher, Priest, and Pastor. He wears a cassock of white silk, uses white silk shoes, and a crosier mounted by a cross. He issues medals, confers knighthood. He sends ambassadors. He has a gold-and-white standard.

Daily Program of Pius XII

6:30 a.m.—rises; prayer; exercise
7:10 a.m.—enters his chapel; meditation
    Holy Mass; thanksgiving
8:30 a.m.—breakfast of coffee and dry bread
8:50 a.m.—enters his private study
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.—audiences:
    with cardinals and high Vatican officials
    with diplomats and state officials
    special, with other persons
    with the public
3:00 p.m.—lunch of soup, meat, and vegetables, and sometimes fruit and cheese; Franciscan brothers prepare the meals
4:00 p.m.—walks in the Vatican gardens, reading
5:00 p.m.—goes to the chapel; says the rosary
    reads part of the breviary
6:00 p.m.—goes to his study and works
8:00 p.m.—supper of eggs and fruit
    goes to the chapel and prays
9:00 p.m.—works in his study, on to
1:30 a.m. or later—prays in the chapel
    reads the breviary; night prayers
    retires, sleeping at best five hours

58. The Roman Curia

What is the Roman Curia?—It is the organization of various bodies to which the Pope has delegated the exercise of his jurisdiction.

Almost all the heads of the bodies in the Roman Curia are cardinals.

The Roman Curia is the papal court; it is the core of the government of the Church. The Holy Father possesses complete and absolute power over the government of the Church; but it is not possible for him to exercise his authority personally and directly over every detail in the worldwide Church. A great deal of the jurisdiction has therefore been delegated to the Roman Curia, which at present consists of:

(a) Twelve ***Congregations,*** namely: Of the Holy Office, of the Consistory, for the Oriental Church, of the Sacraments, of the Council, of Religious, for the Propagation of the Faith, of Sacred Rites, of Ceremonies, of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, of Seminaries and Universities, and of the Basilica of St. Peter.

(b) Three ***Tribunals,*** namely: Sacred Penitentiary, Sacred Roman Rota, and Apostolic Signature.

(c) Five ***Offices,*** namely: Apostolic Chancery, Apostolic Datary, Apostolic Camera, Secretariate of State, and Secretariate of Briefs to Princes and Latin Letters.

What in general are the duties of the twelve Congregations of the Roman Curia?—Their duties are summarized below:

1. The *Congregation of the Holy Office* guards Catholic doctrine in faith and morals, protects sacramental dogma, acts on heresy and heretics, decides matters related to the condemnation of books, the doctrine of indulgences, new prayers and devotions.

Unlike all other Congregations, it has judicial, as well as administrative powers. The importance of this sacred congregation is shown by the fact that the Holy Father Himself is its Prefect, acting with a Cardinal-Secretary. This, the Consistorial Congregation, and that for the Oriental Church are the only administrative Departments thus personally headed by the Pope himself. All other congregations have cardinal-prefects, and the tribunals and offices have cardinal or other prelates at their head.

2. The *Consistorial Congregation* prepares subjects of discussion at the papal consistories, where the College of Cardinals with the Pope deliberate on important matters. It judges the competency of all the Congregations with the exception of that of the Holy Office.

It is this Congregation through which the Pope nominates bishops and other high officials, after inquiring into their qualifications; it forms new dioceses, provinces, etc. that are not under the Propagation of the Faith or of the Congregation for the Oriental Church, and looks after their preservation.

3. The *Congregation for the Oriental Church* takes care of all matters related to the Eastern Church. (*See pages* 110-111.)

4. The *Congregation of the Sacraments* looks after the external regulations of the seven sacraments, ordains decrees and grants dispensations; it has charge of matters related to the validity of Orders or Matrimony.

5. The *Congregation of the Council* has supervision over secular clergy and laymen, including parish priests, religious associations (even those under religious), taxes, etc.; it has charge of episcopal conferences. It deals with matters related to the observence of the laws of the Church.

6. The *Congregation of Religious* has authority over matters related to all religious, including lay members of Third Orders; it takes up their government, discipline, and privileges, and supervises their property and studies.

7. The *Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith* has charge of all matters related to the missions; missionary societies and seminaries are under its jurisdiction.

8. The *Congregation of Sacred Rites* acts upon matters pertaining to rites and ceremonies; it considers the beatification and canonization of departed holy souls; it bestows insignia and marks of honor.

9. The *Congregation of Ceremonies* has control of ceremonies in the papal chapel and court, and of functions performed by cardinals outside of the papal chapel; it judges matters of precedence of cardinals and legates.

10. The *Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs* has charge of matters related to civil laws and governments; its prefect is the Cardinal Secretary of State. Whenever a settlement is necessary in conjunction with civil authority, this Congregation has charge of the formation and division of dioceses, the appointment of bishops and other prelates, etc.

11. The *Congregation of Seminaries and Universities* supervises seminaries and universities, even those under religious orders, inquiring not only into government, but also into curricula; it establishes standards and confers academic degrees.

12. The *Congregation of the Basilica of St. Peter* looks after the upkeep of that Basilica.

What is the jurisdiction of each of the three Tribunals of the Curia?—The jurisdiction of each of the three Tribunals of the Curia may be summarized thus:

1. The *Sacred Penitentiary* judges all cases involving conscience, whether sacramental or not, and all cases concerning the granting and use of indulgences, outside of the rights of the Holy Office on the subject of dogmatic doctrine.

2. The *Sacred Roman Rota* has charge of matters involving judicial procedure, outside of the rights of the Holy Office and the Congregation of Sacred Rites.

3. The *Apostolic Signature* is the supreme court of the Roman Curia. It has charge of all appeals, and settles all cases regarding jurisdiction of inferior tribunals.

Summarize briefly the duties of the five Offices of the Roman Curia.—This is a brief summary:

(a) The *Apostolic Chancery* sends out Apostolic Letters and Bulls on matters of major importance.

(b) The *Apostolic Datary* takes care of the appointment of candidates to benefices, and their due taxation.

(c) The *Apostolic Camera* has charge over all temporal goods and rights of the Holy See, especially when the See is vacant. It corresponds to the Treasury of the Church. Its head, the *camerlengo* assumes the regency upon the death of a Pope, and makes arrangements for the *election*.

(d) The *Secretariate of State* prepares matters for the consideration of the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. The Cardinal-Secretary of State may be said to be the *Prime Minister* of the Pope.

(e) The *Secretariate of Briefs* to Princes and Latin Letters transcribes into Latin all acts of the Pope that he endorses to it.

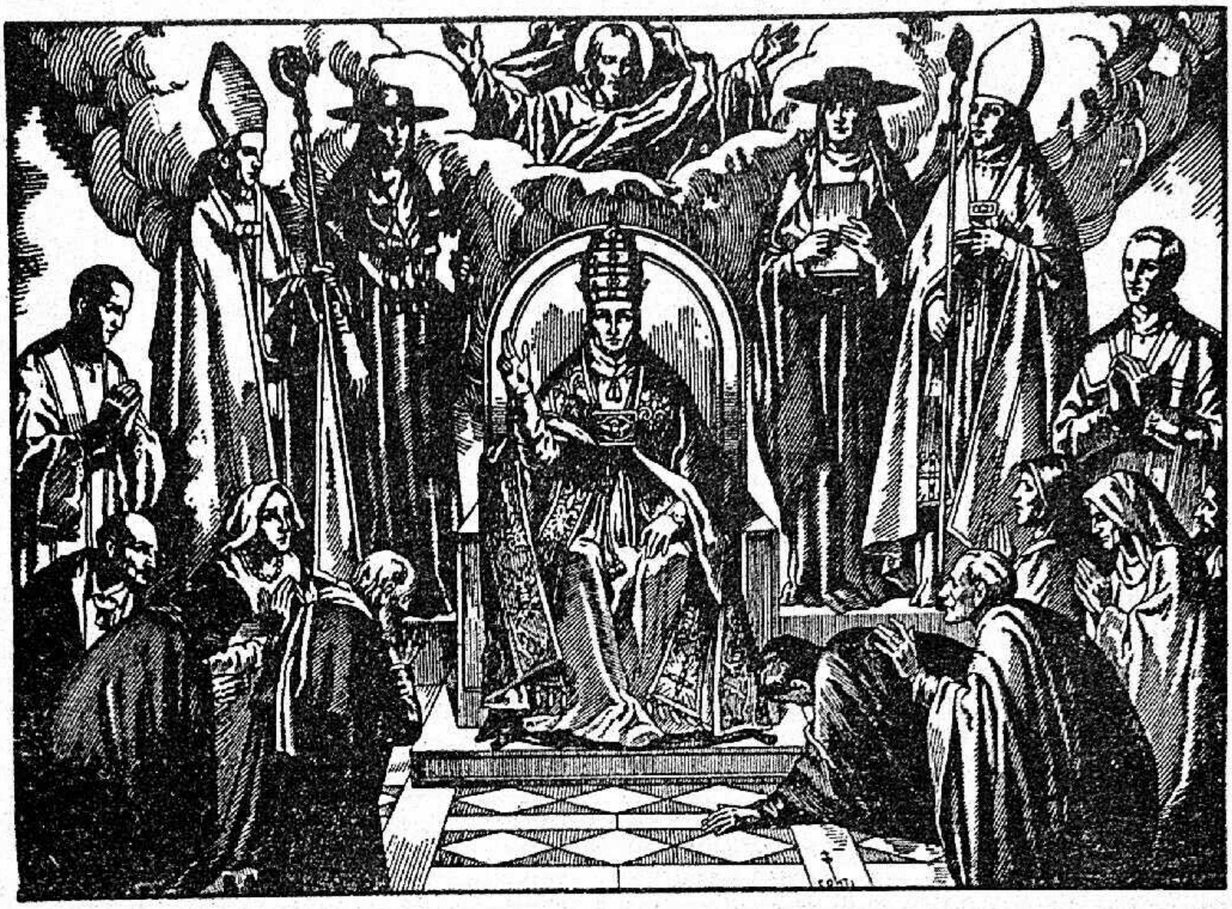
The Papal Elections

When the Dean of the College of Cardinals publicly announces the death of the Pope, all the cardinals throughout the world are convoked to a solemn conclave, for the election of a new Supreme Pontiff. The conclave is held within fifteen to eighteen days after the death of the Holy Father.

If all the cardinals are present on the fifteenth day after the death of the Pope, then the conclave begins. If not all the cardinals are present, the conclave is postponed until the eighteenth day. Then the cardinals, after celebrating Holy Mass, gather in the Sistine Chapel, for the elections. And until they have made a choice, they remain in seclusion within a part of the Vatican, reserved for them.

Any male Catholic of whatever country or race, even a layman, may be elected Pope. Should a layman be chosen, he would have to be ordained priest and consecrated bishop, before he may assume the duties of his office. To be validly the Supreme Pontiff, the elected one is required to accept the office. The Pope is elected for life; however, if he wishes, he may resign, and a new Pope would then be elected.

The voting by the cardinals is done on specially-printed ballots. A two-thirds majority plus one is required to elect. Two ballots are taken every morning and evening until a selection is made. As long as no choice is made, the ballots are burned with damp straw; the heavy black smoke coming out from the chimney is a sign to the public usually assembled in the plaza outside that no decision has been reached. But when a candidate receives a two-thirds majority plus one, then he is elected, and the ballots are burned without the damp straw. Light smoke issuing from the chimney notifies the eager public that they have a new Holy Father.



The Church is a closely organized and united society, including the hierarchy and the faithful. All members render loving obedience to the infallible Vicar of Christ. The Pope does not rule as a proud monarch, but as a Father, the representative of God; as a good Shepherd, solicitous for each member of the great flock. The unquestioning obedience of the faithful is responsible for the wonderful unity among the members of the Church throughout the world. There are about four hundred twenty-five million Catholics, all submitting to the hierarchy, at the head of which is the Pope.

59. The Hierarchy

What is the hierarchy?—The hierarchy is the organization in successive grades of the ruling powers of the Church.

1. The hierarchy is the "teaching Church," the *ruling body* composed of the priests with their bishops and the Pope above all. It is an army of leaders having care and control of the holy and sacred things of the Church.

Under this army of the "teaching Church" is the "hearing Church"—the faithful, the laity.

2. The members of the hierarchy differ in two ways: in the *power of orders*, and in the *power of jurisdiction*.

The power of orders is given by the sacrament of ordination. It is the power to sanctify, a *permanent spiritual power* that no earthly authority can take away. The power of jurisdiction is given by a superior, to enable a subject to exercise his spiritual authority lawfully. This power may be *limited and revoked* by legitimate authority.

How do the members of the hierarchy differ in their power of orders? — The members of the hierarchy are divided into three classes with different power of orders: deacons, priests, and bishops.

This order of rank and power has been in force in the Church *from the time of the Apostles.* These three classes were foreshadowed in the high priest, priests, and Levites of the Old Law. They also had counterparts in Our Lord, the Apostles, and the disciples. Our Lord gave full powers to the twelve Apostles, but only limited power to the disciples.

1. *Deacons* can baptize, preach, and give Holy Communion.

The Apostles ordained the first deacons. The deacons were appointed by the Apostles to distribute alms and were consecrated by the laying on of hands accompanied by prayers (Acts 6:6).

2. *Priests* have higher orders than deacons. They can offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and forgive sins in the Sacrament of Penance. They can administer all sacraments except those of Confirmation and Holy Orders. With special faculties they may even administer Confirmation; in the Catholic Eastern Rites priests administer Confirmation immediately after Baptism.

Priests were prefigured in the seventy-two disciples of Our Lord. The word "priest" is derived from the Greek *presbyter*, which means "the elder," a term used by the first converted Jews.

3. *Bishops* have full power of orders; they are the *successors* of the Apostles. A bishop administers all the sacraments; he alone administers Holy Orders. He consecrates holy oils, churches, chalices, etc.

Archbishops, primates, patriarchs, and even the Pope himself have no fuller power of *orders* than a bishop of a missionary diocese.

How do the members of the hierarchy differ in the power of jurisdiction?—The members of the hierarchy are divided into many ranks according to the power of jurisdiction, the chief ranks being those of Pope, bishops, and parish priests.

These differences of rank and power are necessary for the proper government of the Church just as there are differences of rank and power in the civil government. Without them the Church would be a society without organization.

1. In organization the Church is like a vast *army;* the ***Pope,*** its visible Head, is commander-in-chief of this army. He has jurisdiction and supreme and sovereign power and authority over the entire Church. He is formally addressed "Your Holiness."

This is how one can easily find the True Church: "Where Peter is, there is the Church." To show the variety and extent of the interests of the Church, in 1953 at the Vatican there are diplomatic representatives from forty-four nations.

2. The ***Cardinals*** are the Pope's advisers and assistants; they are his ministers. He appoints them, and the number is not to exceed seventy. Together they form the *Apostolic* or *Sacred College;* it is this body that, in solemn conclave, chooses a new Pope when the See falls vacant.

The cardinals form the various congregations or committees in the Papal court, such as the Congregations of the Religious, of Rites, of the Sacraments, etc. In the past many cardinals only had the orders of deacon. The cardinals are distinguished by a *red hat* and mantle, as a sign that they will be loyal to the Pope at the cost of their blood. A cardinal is addressed "Your Eminence."

3. ***Nuncios, internuncios, legates,*** and ***apostolic delegates*** are representatives or ambassadors of the Pope to different countries, courts, or occasions.

Minor representatives of the Holy See, sent for some special purposes to different places, are termed *Apostolic Visitors.* In the United States we have an Apostolic Delegate. Besides the ordinary powers he has as Apostolic Delegate, the Holy See has delegated to him extraordinary powers.

4. A patriarch is a bishop, successor of the Apostles, who holds the highest rank after the Pope, in jurisdiction. ***Patriarchs*** are *independent* of any ecclesiastical authority save that of the Pope, who is not only Patriarch of Rome, but Sovereign Pontiff, successor of Peter.

A patriarch ordains all the bishops of his patriarchate, summons synods, legislates on fasting and abstinence, reception of the sacraments, liturgy and ritual, and other observances. At present there are only five major or Greater Patriarchs: those of Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria. The title "Patriarch" is however given as an honorary title to archbishops of certain places.

5. ***Archbishops, bishops,*** and ***vicars-apostolic*** possess varying jurisdictions. They rule over archdioceses, dioceses, vicariates.

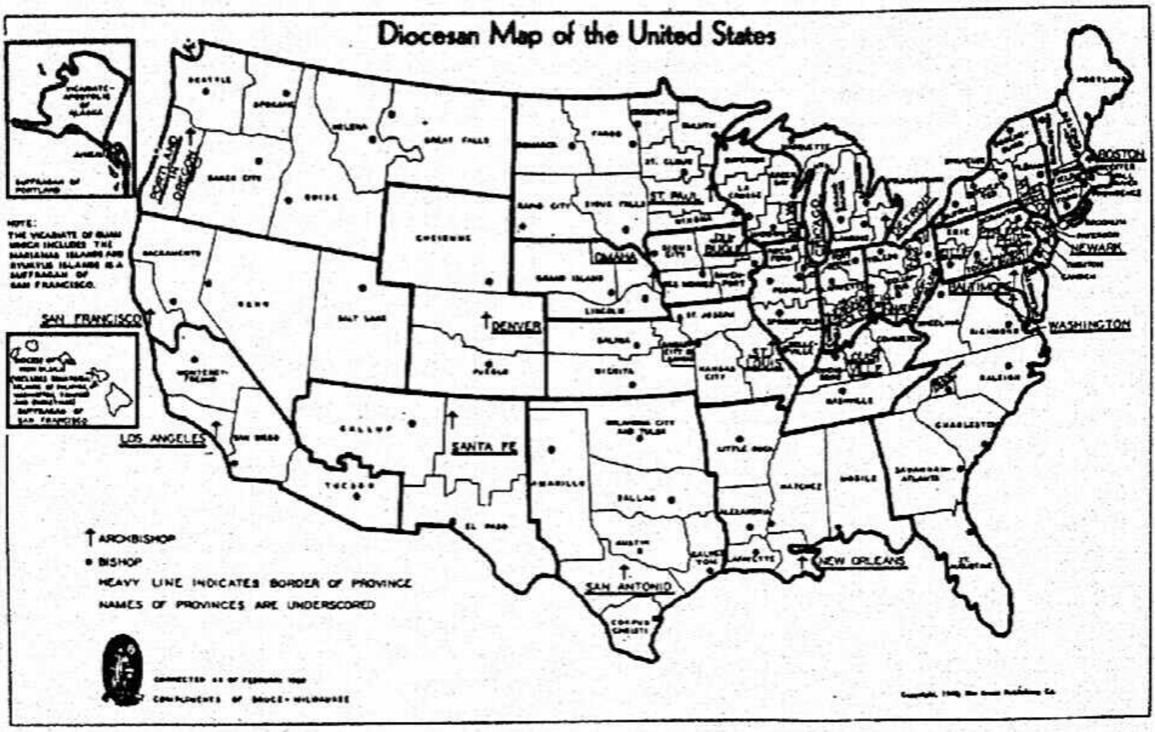
An archbishop and bishop are entitled "Most Reverend," and formally addressed "Your Excellency." The term ***Primate*** is now only an honorary title; formerly a Primate exercised jurisdiction over whole countries or several provinces.

6. Ordinarily an ***Abbot*** is the superior of an abbey of Benedictines, Cistercians, or other monks. He is elected for life, and has complete authority in the abbey in accordance with the rules of his order.

Today the title "abbot" is also granted as a sign of honor; the benefice is some extinct foundation.

7. A ***Monsignor*** is one who for some special merit has been raised above the ranks of the ordinary clergy, and thus joins the prelates; the title is honorary.

The term *Monsignor* is often used in addressing different degrees of prelates. But of the Monsignori proper there are several ranks: protonotaries apostolic, domestic prelates, etc. These are addressed "Right Reverend"; lower ranks, "Very Reverend."


Diocesan Map of the United States
SEATTLE
SPOKANE
PORTLAND IN OREGON
BAKER CITY
BOISE
HELENA
GREAT FALLS
CHEYENNE
SACRAMENTO
RENO
SALT LAKE
SAN FRANCISCO
MONTEREY-FRESNO
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO
TUCSON
GALLUP
SANTA FE
DENVER
PUEBLO
EL PASO
AMARILLO
DALLAS
AUSTIN
SAN ANTONIO
CORPUS CHRISTI
GALVESTON
OKLAHOMA CITY AND TULSA
WICHITA
SALINA
LINCOLN
GRAND ISLAND
OMAHA
FARGO
BISMARCK
RAPID CITY
SIOUX FALLS
ST. CLOUD
DULUTH
CROOKSTON
ST. PAUL
WINONA
SIOUX CITY
DUBUQUE
DES MOINES
DAVENPORT
LA CROSSE
SUPERIOR
GREEN BAY
MARQUETTE
CHICAGO
DETROIT
PEORIA
SPRINGFIELD
ST. JOSEPH
KANSAS CITY
ST. LOUIS
LOUISVILLE
NASHVILLE
COVINGTON
WHEELING
LITTLE ROCK
NATCHEZ
MOBILE
ALEXANDRIA
LAFAYETTE
NEW ORLEANS
SAVANNAH-ATLANTA
ST. AUGUSTINE
CHARLESTON
RALEIGH
RICHMOND
WASHINGTON
BALTIMORE
ERIE
NEWARK
TRENTON
CAMDEN
BROOKLYN
PATERSON
BOSTON
PORTLAND
SYRACUSE
VICARIATE-APOSTOLIC OF ALASKA
JUNEAU
SUFFRAGAN OF PORTLAND
NOTE: THE VICARIATE OF GUAM WHICH INCLUDES THE MARIANAS ISLANDS AND RYUKYUS ISLANDS IS A SUFFRAGAN OF SAN FRANCISCO.
SUFFRAGAN OF SAN FRANCISCO
† ARCHBISHOP
• BISHOP
HEAVY LINE INDICATES BORDER OF PROVINCE
NAMES OF PROVINCES ARE UNDERSCORED
COMPLIMENTS OF BRUCE-MILWAUKEE

The above map shows the different ecclesiastical divisions in the United States. There are 25 ecclesiastical provinces and 105 dioceses, with four cardinals, 26 archbishops, and 163 bishops.

Of the U. S. population (including possessions) of 150,712,424 people, 30,425,015 are Catholic, over 19%, the largest of the religious bodies in the country. For this Catholic population there are at present 45,222 diocesan and religious priests and 166,769 religious Brothers and Sisters.

We have a total of 12,124 Catholic educational institutions, including 240 colleges and universities, 439 seminaries, 2416 high schools, 9029 elementary schools. In full-time staff are 118,104 teachers. Including public school children in special classes, 5,436,959 children are receiving religious instruction.

Of Catholic news publications there are 422, with a circulation of over 15,200,000. Of institutions for social work: there are 275 homes for the aged, 341 orphan asylums, 156 protective institutions, and 901 hospitals.

(The Official Catholic Directory of the U. S.—1953)

60. Bishops and Priests

What jurisdiction has a bishop? — A bishop rules over that part of the Church, an organized territory called a bishopric, diocese, or see, assigned to him by the Pope.

The word "bishop" is a translation from the Greek *episcopos*, which means "overseer", a term first applied during Apostolic times. To Titus St. Paul wrote, "For this reason I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set right anything that is defective and shouldst appoint presbyters in every city" (Tit. 1:5).

1. The bishops are the *major-generals* in the vast army of the Church. They command the different divisions of that army, subject to the authority of the commander-in-chief, the Bishop of Rome. Under their jurisdiction are the parish priests in charge of parishes.

As the Pope is the successor of St. Peter, so the other bishops are the direct successors of the other Apostles. Bishops are called "princes of the Church". To them Our Lord spoke: "He who hears you hears Me." They and their Vicars General are termed *Ordinaries*, because they have ordinary, or immediate, jurisdiction over the diocese.

2. A bishop *administers* the temporal possessions of his diocese, and gives an account of their administration to the Pope. He provides for the education and training of candidates for the priesthood, and the religious education of his whole flock. He gives faculties to hear confessions, censors books on religious subjects, and has many other powers for the proper administration of his diocese. A bishop is supreme in his diocese, but he is *subject* in all things to the Pope, who appoints him.

The Pope grants their jurisdiction to bishops; before a bishop can exercise his office, he has to be recognized and confirmed by the Pope. He is obliged to go to Rome at stated intervals, to report on the state of his diocese. A bishop has the right to be called to a General Council, which is an assembly of the bishops of the world, presided over by the Pope. But, "If anyone is eager for the office of bishop, he desires a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1).

3. A bishop is *shepherd* of his flock. He appoints and supervises parish priests to help him. In governing his diocese, he is assisted by a number of "canons", or by diocesan consultors. A *coadjutor* or *auxiliary* bishop is commissioned to assist the bishop of a diocese. Usually a coadjutor bishop is one with the right of succession.

The Pope addresses a bishop *Brother*, because as bishops they have the same rank. Bishops wear a *mitre*, and carry a *crosier* as a sign of their office of pastor. They wear a pectoral cross. They have a *ring*, as a symbol of their union with their diocese. The faithful kiss this ring in token of obedience and respect.

4. A *Vicar Apostolic* is a bishop who rules over a territory that is not yet fully organized, called a *Vicariate Apostolic*.

When the territory is first organized, it is usually placed under the care of a priest, and not a bishop. This priest is called a *Prefect Apostolic* and his territory is an *Apostolic Prefecture*.

5. A *titular Bishop* or *Archbishop* is one who bears the title of a diocese, but has no jurisdiction over it. Nuncios, apostolic delegates, coadjutor and auxiliary bishops, and vicars apostolic are generally titular.

Titular bishops and archbishops have no actual sees; they are given the titles of certain sees that previously existed, but that have since disappeared in the reorganization of jurisdictions, or because of the inroads of Mohammedanism, heresy, or paganism. The names of the sees are kept intact, and awarded to those whom the Holy See wishes to raise to the rank of bishops, and given special work.

6. An *Archbishop* or *Metropolitan* is a bishop who has certain powers of jurisdiction granted by the Pope over neighboring dioceses composing his province.

Archbishops wear a *pallium*, a white strip of wool, on the shoulders, as a symbol of gentleness. They act as first judges of appeal from a decision of their *suffragan* bishops.

Who assist the bishops in the care of souls? — The priests, especially parish priests, assist the bishops in the care of souls.

1. Parish priests are *captains* in the great army that is the Church. They command the soldiers of the Church, all baptized persons residing in the particular districts, called parishes, assigned to them by the bishops.

The parish priest carries out the purpose of Christ in founding the Church. He teaches the people their religion, their duties towards God and each other. He governs the people, leading them in Catholic work. He sanctifies them by administering the sacraments.

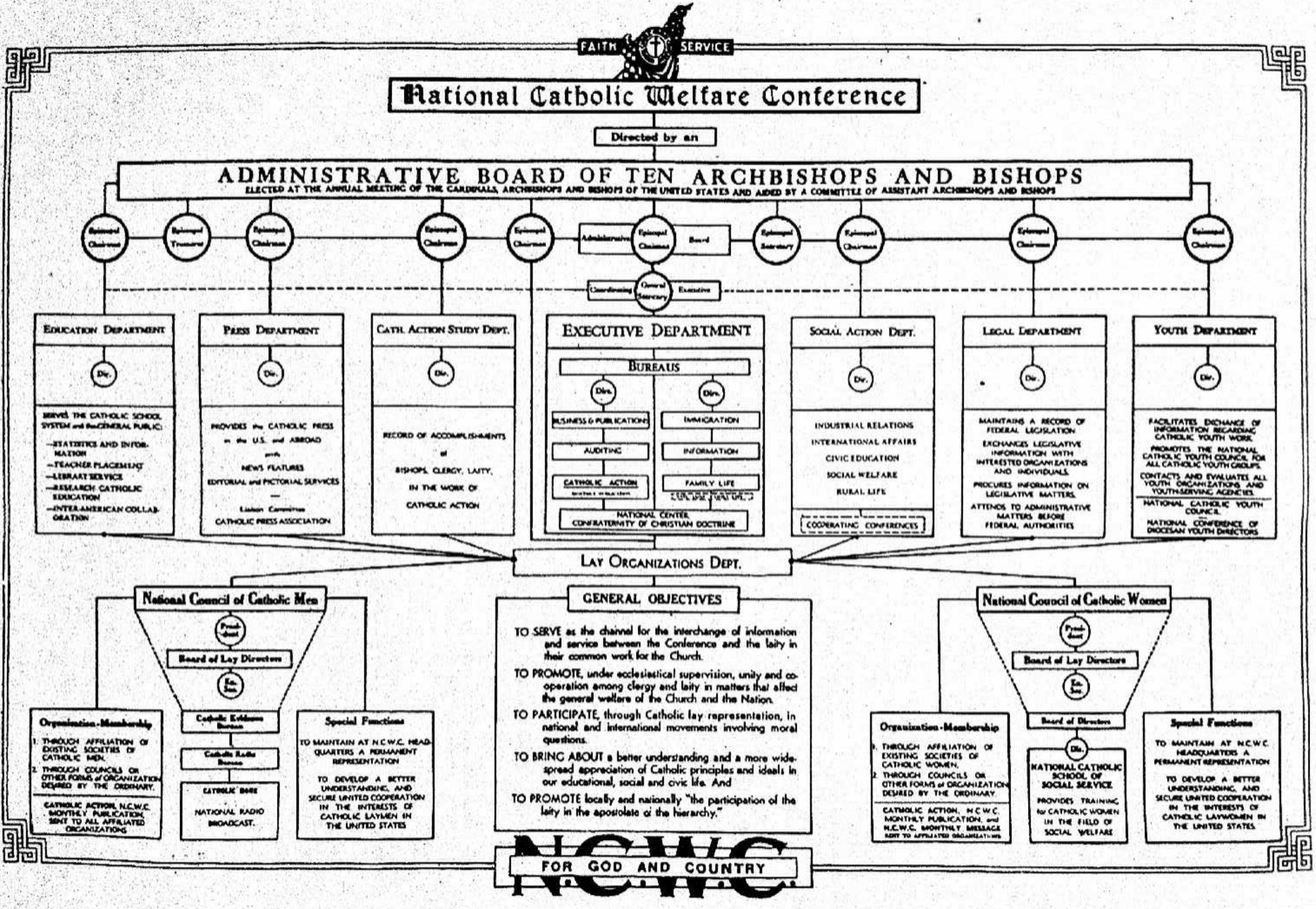
2. Parish priests *receive* their orders and jurisdiction from the bishop. They are his spiritual children, and are bound to carry out his commands. In the parish the parish priest represents the bishop, and no one may, without his consent or the bishop's, exercise spiritual functions there, such as marrying, baptizing, preaching, burying, giving extreme unction, etc.

A *vicar forane* (called also *urban* and *rural dean*) is a parish priest having supervisory power in the name of the bishop over neighboring parishes. A *vicar-general* is the chief among the officers of a diocese. Parish priests of large districts have priests helping them, called *curates* or *assistants*.

3. The *duties* of parish priests are many, varied, and of great responsibility. Like all priests, they are pledged to lifelong celibacy. Daily they must recite the Breviary, the priests' book, which cannot be read under less than an hour's time.

On account of these heavy responsibilities all Catholics have the obligation to pray for their priests, and to help them as much as possible, especially that they may continue in the love of God, and be enlightened by the Holy Ghost.

A parish priest and his curates have to visit the sick of the parish any time of the day or night, whenever there is a call. He has to give the last sacraments to the dying, however contagious or repellent the disease of such persons might be. He has to hear confessions hour after hour; he has to fast as long as the Masses he is scheduled to say have not been said. He must renounce the world with all its worldly amusements for the love of God. As shepherd of his flock, he is responsible to God for the souls of those committed to his charge; and on the day of judgment, he has to render a strict account of his stewardship over them.


FAITH
SERVICE
National Catholic Welfare Conference
Directed by an
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF TEN ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS
ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CARDINALS, ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES AND AIDED BY A COMMITTEE OF ASSISTANT ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS
Episcopal Chairman
Episcopal Treasurer
Episcopal Chairman
Episcopal Chairman
Episcopal Chairman
Administrative
Episcopal Chairman
Board
Episcopal Secretary
Episcopal Chairman
Episcopal Chairman
Episcopal Chairman
Coordinating
General Secretary
Executive
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Dir.
SERVES THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM and the GENERAL PUBLIC:
—STATISTICS AND INFORMATION
—TEACHER PLACEMENT
—LIBRARY SERVICE
—RESEARCH CATHOLIC EDUCATION
—INTER-AMERICAN COLLABORATION
PRESS DEPARTMENT
Dir.
PROVIDES the CATHOLIC PRESS in the U.S. and ABROAD with NEWS FEATURES
EDITORIAL and PICTORIAL SERVICES
Liaison Committee
CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
CATH. ACTION STUDY DEPT.
Dir.
RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS of BISHOPS, CLERGY, LAITY, IN THE WORK OF CATHOLIC ACTION
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
BUREAUS
Dirs.
Dirs.
BUSINESS & PUBLICATIONS
AUDITING
CATHOLIC ACTION
IMMIGRATION
INFORMATION
FAMILY LIFE
NATIONAL CENTER CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
SOCIAL ACTION DEPT.
Dir.
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
CIVIC EDUCATION
SOCIAL WELFARE
RURAL LIFE
COOPERATING CONFERENCES
LEGAL DEPARTMENT
Dir.
MAINTAINS A RECORD OF FEDERAL LEGISLATION
EXCHANGES LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION WITH INTERESTED ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS
PROCURES INFORMATION ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS
ATTENDS TO ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS BEFORE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES
YOUTH DEPARTMENT
Dir.
FACILITATES EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION REGARDING CATHOLIC YOUTH WORK
PROMOTES THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH COUNCIL FOR ALL CATHOLIC YOUTH GROUPS
CONTACTS AND EVALUATES ALL YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND YOUTH-SERVING AGENCIES
NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH COUNCIL
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF DIOCESAN YOUTH DIRECTORS
LAY ORGANIZATIONS DEPT.
National Council of Catholic Men
President
Board of Lay Directors
Ex. Sec.
Organization-Membership
1. THROUGH AFFILIATION OF EXISTING SOCIETIES OF CATHOLIC MEN.
2. THROUGH COUNCILS OR OTHER FORMS of ORGANIZATION DESIRED BY THE ORDINARY.
CATHOLIC ACTION, N.C.W.C. MONTHLY PUBLICATION, SENT TO ALL AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS
Catholic Evidence Bureau
Catholic Radio Bureau
CATHOLIC HOUR
NATIONAL RADIO BROADCAST.
Special Functions
TO MAINTAIN AT N.C.W.C. HEADQUARTERS A PERMANENT REPRESENTATION
TO DEVELOP A BETTER UNDERSTANDING, AND SECURE UNITED COOPERATION IN THE INTERESTS OF CATHOLIC LAYMEN IN THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL OBJECTIVES
National Council of Catholic Women
President
Board of Lay Directors
Ex. Sec.
Board of Directors
Dir.
Organization-Membership
1. THROUGH AFFILIATION OF EXISTING SOCIETIES OF CATHOLIC WOMEN.
2. THROUGH COUNCILS OR OTHER FORMS of ORGANIZATION DESIRED BY THE ORDINARY.
CATHOLIC ACTION, N.C.W.C. MONTHLY PUBLICATION, and N.C.W.C. MONTHLY MESSAGE SENT TO AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS
NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
PROVIDES TRAINING for CATHOLIC WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WELFARE
Special Functions
TO MAINTAIN AT N.C.W.C. HEADQUARTERS A PERMANENT REPRESENTATION
TO DEVELOP A BETTER UNDERSTANDING, AND SECURE UNITED COOPERATION IN THE INTERESTS OF CATHOLIC LAYWOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES.
N.C.W.C.
FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

TO SERVE as the channel for the interchange of information and service between the Conference and the laity in their common work for the Church.

TO PROMOTE, under ecclesiastical supervision, unity and co-operation among clergy and laity in matters that affect the general welfare of the Church and the Nation.

TO PARTICIPATE, through Catholic lay representation, in national and international movements involving moral questions.

TO BRING ABOUT a better understanding and a more wide-spread appreciation of Catholic principles and ideals in our educational, social and civic life. And

TO PROMOTE locally and nationally "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy."

61. The National Catholic Welfare Conference

What is the National Catholic Welfare Conference?—The National Catholic Welfare Conference is an organization of the cardinals, archbishops and bishops of the United States, centered at Washington, with the purpose of unifying, coordinating, and organizing the Catholics of the country in works of social welfare, education, and similar activities, by means particularly of the press and of existing lay organizations.

1. The NCWC represents the *united influence* of the hierarchy on national, social, and civic policies; it provides a remarkable leadership for the promotion of social justice, education, a Catholic press, and coordinated lay action. In a certain sense, the NCWC is the ***nerve center*** of the Church in America.

The NCWC particularly aims at the ***participation of the laity*** in the work of the Church, building up and strengthening the Kingdom of Christ; for surely the laity forms part of the Mystical Body of Christ.

2. The NCWC is national storehouse, clearing-house, and *powerhouse;* to fulfill its purpose it uses chiefly the press, the radio, conferences, and forums. The NCWC does not aim to create new organizations; its purpose is to help, strengthen, and unify those already existing.

The NCWC collects information and puts it out in printed form; it gives advice and field service connected with the work of the various divisions.

3. The illustration *(on the opposite page)* shows the organization, departments, and functions of the NCWC. Over all is an *Administrative Board* of ten archbishops and bishops; the Board is elected at the annual meeting of the cardinals, archbishops and bishops of the country. U. S. cardinals are members *ex officio.*

An annual report is made to the Holy See. No official action of the Conference as a whole can be taken without authorization from the Administrative Board. At the annual general meeting of the bishops, the administrative bishops give detailed reports, and obtain authorization for their work.

4. The Episcopal Chairman of the Executive Department is the *General Secretary.* He not only directs the multiple activities of the different divisions in his department, but also supervises and coordinates the work of the other units of the NCWC. He is the executive officer of the Conference.

Through the General Secretary the departmental reports and all information about the work of the headquarters staff are regularly sent to the administrative board members.

Have episcopal committees been formed in addition to the eight Departments? Yes, certain episcopal committees have been formed, to deal with special problems.

1. The *American Board of Catholic Missions* has jurisdiction over the collection of funds for both home and foreign missions.

2. The *Committee on Propagation of the Faith* promotes the work of the Pontifical Society.

3. The *Committee on the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* organizes the work of that Confraternity in the spread of knowledge and practice of the Faith.

4. The *Committee on Seminaries* is concerned in the spiritual and intellectual training given in seminaries.

5. The *Committee on Motion Pictures* promotes the production of good moral pictures and discourages the production of objectionable pictures. It directs the National Legion of Decency.

6. The *Committee on the National Organization for Decent Literature* works against indecent periodical literature.

7. The *Welfare, Emergency, and Relief Committee,* in which membership is identical with the Administrative Board, coordinates the raising and distribution of funds to meet relief needs.

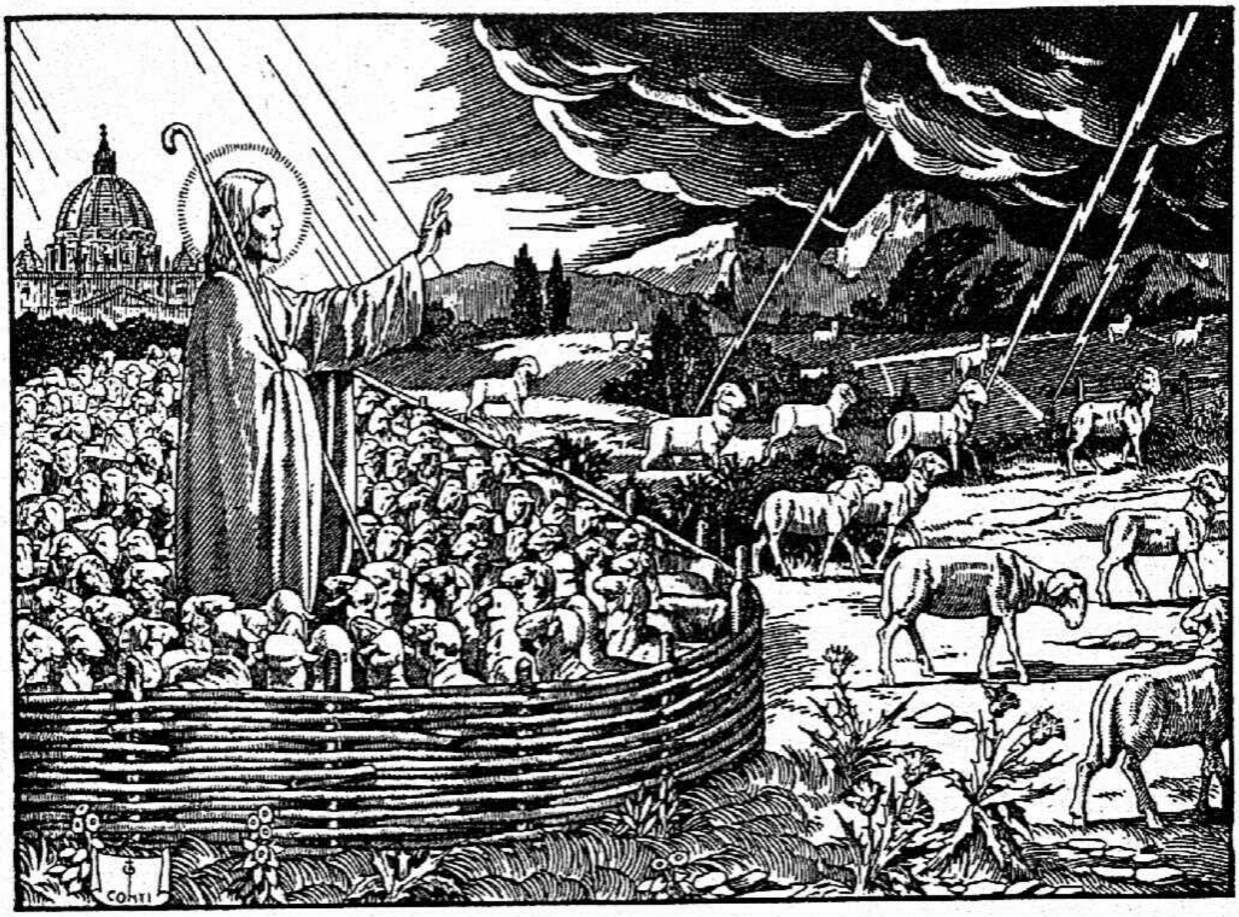
8. The *War Relief Services* attends to relief abroad, and administers a program of assistance to war victims.

9. The *National Catholic Resettlement Council* finds homes and employment for displaced persons in the United States.

10. The *National Catholic Community Service* is the official Catholic agency to serve the spiritual, welfare, and recreational needs of men and women in the armed forces, war production workers, and families.

11. The *Catholic Committee for Refugees* provides material and spiritual aid to exiles from their countries.

Other Bishops' Committees are: to Promote the Pope's Peace Plan, for the North American College in Rome, to Complete the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, for Catholic Migrants, for Polish Relief, for the Spanish-speaking, for the Mexican Seminary.



"I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, even as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. And other sheep I have that are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:14-16).

Pagans are sheep of Christ that have not yet heard His voice. They must also be brought into the Church. Heretics are sheep that have left the fold of Christ. They must return to the Church, if they would hear the voice of Christ, the Good Shepherd, Who lovingly calls them to His True Church.

62. The Laity

Who are the laity of the Church?—The laity of the Church are all its members who do not belong to the clerical or to the religious state.

1. *All members* of the Church, whether religious, clerical or lay, are termed "the faithful." After Baptism we join the ranks.

The laity must remember that they are *part of the Church*. They must understand that when anyone speaks of the "Church" they are included as we include the heart and mind of a man with his soul when we speak of him. ***The Church is you and I.***

2. The *clerical state* includes all priests and aspirants to the priesthood who have received tonsure. Students of seminaries are aspirants to the priesthood.

"Tonsure" is the rite by which a layman is initiated into the clerical state. The bishop, or any delegated prelate, cuts the candidate's hair in some prescribed form, and invests him with a surplice.

3. The *religious state* includes those who are members of religious orders or congregations, bound by either temporary or perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, obedience.

Aspirants, postulants, and novices are preparing to embrace the religious state.

Do Catholic sinners continue to belong to the Church?—Yes.

1. Unless one *cuts himself off* by heresy, apostasy, or excommunication, a Catholic sinner continues to be a member of the

Church. Those in mortal sin are called "dead members", for their soul dead in sin.

Indeed the Church is the Church of Saints; but the greatest part of its activities has to be for sinners. Perhaps we may say, without fear of contradiction, that most of the members of the Church are sinners. We all fall away from the ideal, at some time or other; then the Church calls, to bring us back.

2. Until we attain heavenly bliss, there will always be the *darkness of sin,* the pain of evil. Christ Himself spoke of bad fish with the good, of cockle among the wheat.

Of the sheep in the fold, one wanders out. But Our Lord longs for the wanderer; let us help bring him back.

3. God gave Catholics the grace of their holy religion. But He also gave them their free will. And they are *free to choose:* whether to act in full accordance with His commands and counsels, or whether to practice only a part, or whether to violate those commands.

There is a wide gap between belief and practice: it is that gap that divides Catholics into ***practical*** and ***nominal Catholics.***

Must the faithful think and act alike? —No.

1. The faithful must *believe* in all the doctrines entrusted by Christ to His Church, and *act* in accordance with those doctrines; but these pertain to the field of *faith and morals,* not to other matters. Therefore there is no question about "thinking and acting alike," among the 425,000,000 Catholics in the world.

Each Catholic is an individual. He must believe that Jesus Christ is God; but with one of his Catholic friends he may differ concerning the best political party to join. He must not deny his Church, but he may argue with the parish priest about who should be one's favorite Saints.

2. The Church is for no particular class, whether millionaires, or laborers, scientists or children; the Church is classless, and for ***all classes,*** for all men. These cannot all act and think in one uniform pattern.

The different classes among Catholics arise from causes apart from the Church, such as racial, cultural, and social causes. But anywhere and everywhere one can be a good Catholic.

3. Good Catholics believe alike in *this:* that they are members of a divinely-established Church, the well-being of which it is their duty to further, by striving to attain the perfection indicated by Christ.

The Church presents us with the ***ideal,*** and provides the means to reach that ideal, inviting and urging us, feeding and shepherding the flock. But the Church does not *guarantee* salvation for all the faithful; because among its doctrines the freedom of the will is as fundamental as the divine authority of the Church.

How can the laity help the Church in the care of souls?—The laity can help the Church in the care of souls by leading lives that will reflect credit on the Church, and by coöperating with their bishops and priests, especially through Catholic Action.

"Even so let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

1. A good Catholic makes serious *efforts* to save his soul. He keeps the commandments of God and the Church. He receives the sacraments. He does all things prescribed by Christ through the Church.

Therefore, he must *know his religion.* He must not be ignorant of Christian doctrine, for by it he learns how to save his soul. By it he learns what to believe, and what to do.

2. A good Catholic *obeys* his ecclesiastical superiors in spiritual matters, and gives them due respect. He sees in his lawful superiors Christ's representatives on earth.

He is loyal to the Church in word and deed. He does not criticise it, or make derogatory remarks about it. Even if his priests may have faults, he tries his best not to bring them and the Church into contempt. If the faults are public and grievous, he may bring the matter to the attention of lawful authority, but always with great prudence.

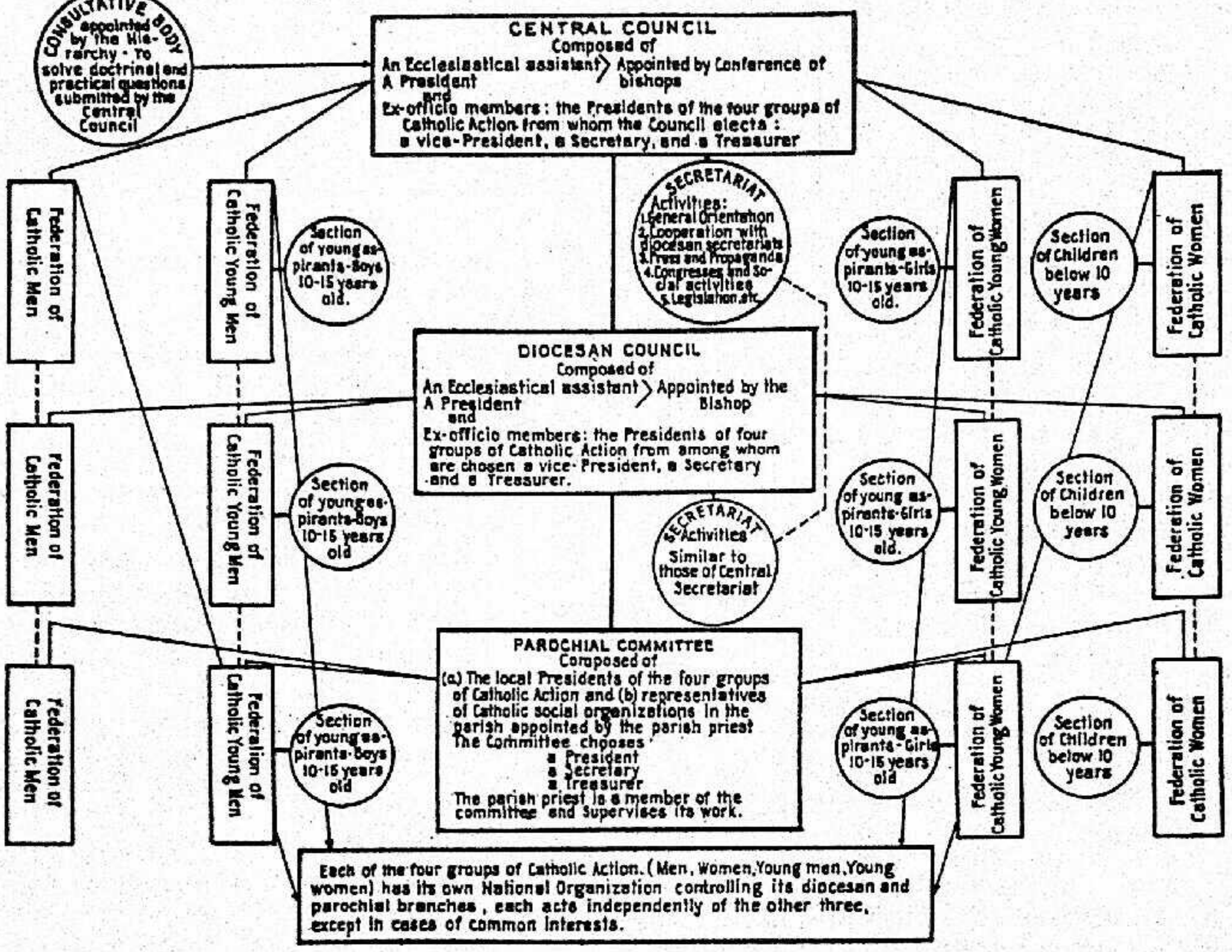
3. According to his means, he *contributes* towards the support of the Church.

This is a serious obligation which too many Catholics neglect. The Church needs support as much as the civil government. *It cannot subsist on air.* Religion makes no progress where Catholics are so indifferent as to begrudge their material support.

4. A good Catholic has before him a *wide scope of activity* if he wishes to participate in the work of the Church; there are no barriers between man and God.

Should a Catholic be moved by a spirit of reform, he need not cut himself off from the Church by founding a new sect. He busies himself within the Fold of the Church, taking active steps to attain the reform he desires. For always there is ***need of reform*** in practices and current conditions, though ***never*** in fundamental doctrine.

ORGANIZATION OF CATHOLIC ACTION


CONSULTATIVE BODY appointed by the Hierarchy - To solve doctrinal and practical questions submitted by the Central Council
CENTRAL COUNCIL
Composed of
An Ecclesiastical assistant
A President
and
Appointed by Conference of bishops
Ex-officio members: the Presidents of the four groups of Catholic Action from whom the Council elects: a vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer
SECRETARIAT
Activities:
1. General Orientation
2. Cooperation with diocesan secretariats
3. Press and Propaganda
4. Congresses and Social activities
5. Legislation etc.
DIOCESAN COUNCIL
Composed of
An Ecclesiastical assistant
A President
and
Appointed by the Bishop
Ex-officio members: the Presidents of four groups of Catholic Action from among whom are chosen a vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
SECRETARIAT
Activities
Similar to those of Central Secretariat
PAROCHIAL COMMITTEE
Composed of
(a) The local Presidents of the four groups of Catholic Action and (b) representatives of Catholic social organizations in the parish appointed by the parish priest
The Committee chooses
a President
a Secretary
a Treasurer
The parish priest is a member of the committee and supervises its work.
Federation of Catholic Men
Federation of Catholic Young Men
Section of young aspirants-Boys 10-15 years old.
Section of young aspirants-Girls 10-15 years old.
Federation of Catholic Young Women
Section of Children below 10 years
Federation of Catholic Women
Each of the four groups of Catholic Action. (Men, Women, Young men, Young women) has its own National Organization controlling its diocesan and parochial branches, each acts independently of the other three, except in cases of common interests.

The diagram above outlines a complete plan of Catholic Action organization in accordance with the directions of Pope Pius XI. The Holy Father did not intend organization to be accomplished in exactly this manner; his instructions were only directive.

In general, Catholic Action in our country is thus organized; in every parish the pastor is the center and director of all Catholic activities. However, it is evident that the hierarchy, by means of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, aims to coordinate the activities of the different religious organizations, into a united Catholic Action.

63. Catholic Action

What is Catholic Action? — Catholic Action is the participation of the organized Catholic laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy, for the purpose of winning or of bringing back souls to Christ.

The National Catholic Welfare Conference (*See page 122*) does not change one fundamental fact: that in each diocese all organizations and activities are dependent on and responsible to the bishop.

1. Catholic Action is the service and apostolate of the *laity*, commandeered by the episcopate. It must be dependent on and perfectly obedient to the hierarchy; there can be no Catholic Action without an episcopal commission.

Since it is a participation, it must depend on the whole; that is, on the hierarchy of Pope, bishops, and priests, to whom Jesus Christ gave the mission to save souls for Him. Catholic Action seeks to establish the reign of Christ, to restore all things in Christ, to spread Catholic principles in every field of life,—in other words, to Christianize the world.

2. Catholic Action is *religion in action*, the result of a living faith. It implies, therefore, personal sanctification, although not directly aimed at it. From this personal sanctification arise works for the salvation

of our neighbor, works that make lay apostles of members of Catholic Action.

Catholic Action requires that Catholics should possess solid piety, a sound knowledge of the Catholic Faith, and unquestioning obedience to the Pope and the hierarchy. The love of God that fills the heart of a faithful Catholic will impel him to join in the work of converting the world to Christ; it will urge him to contribute his help in all the ways he can in the lay state. "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."

3. Catholic Action therefore makes of the layman a ***soldier of Christ,*** a co-missionary of the priesthood. At present the activities are channeled through the National Council of Men, the National Council of Women, and the National Catholic Youth Council. These Councils are really *federations,* made up of existing lay religious organizations affiliated to make one whole.

In the old days when Christianity was new in a pagan world, the laity labored with the Apostles in making Christ known and loved. Today the need for the laity's help is as urgent as at the beginning. Much that was truly Christian has succumbed to modern atheism; the kingdom of Christ is now divided. There are not enough priests; and even if there were, many places, such as mines, offices, and factories would not be easy for a priest to enter in, to win souls to Christ.

What activities are embraced in the work of Catholic Action?—Catholic Action embraces in its work every form of apostolate.

Catholic Action takes into account different aspects of the life of man, the most important of which are the home, school, social, business, and civil life. Catholic Action gives people a complete shaping, not only religious and moral, but social and specialized, according to their condition in life. It helps them solve problems of life in a Christian way.

1. Catholic Action is concerned with the ***home,*** because the home makes or unmakes the individual and nation. Catholic Action is exercised there when the members do all they can to keep the family united and happy, one in the service of God.

Efforts should be made to make the home a joyful place to stay in, so that the members may find their home the most interesting place to go to. Every home should be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Only good books and newspapers must be admitted into the Catholic home.

2. Catholic Action is concerned with the ***school,*** which, especially in these days, influences the minds and hearts of the young so deeply. Many modern parents think they have done their duty when they send their children to school; and so the school must be particularly active in Catholic Action, to form those within its walls.

The pupils must not only learn their religion well, but must also put its principles into practice. They must live so that a Christian life will become second nature to them, and when they leave the school they will continue such a Christian life in the adult world. Even during school days, then, the pupils should practice true Catholic Action in their homes, with their companions, in their school activities, etc.

3. Catholic Action is concerned with the ***social life*** of the nation; it is social action, for it strives towards the greatest good of society. It achieves Christian order for society, by developing integrity of morals, purity of domestic life, practice of charity.

In a word, Catholic Action leads to the peace and prosperity of society as a means towards the attainment of its final purpose of establishing the kingdom of Christ. How great can be the effect in social life of the good example of Catholic young men and young women living according to the principles of their religion! They can prove the truth that it is *not* necessary to sin in order to have fun. They can give effective example in their dress, speech, and general behaviour. How great the evil, then, of their example when Catholic young men and young women from the best schools act against the principles they have learned, and in social life show themselves immodest, hardhearted, and cheap in their behavior.

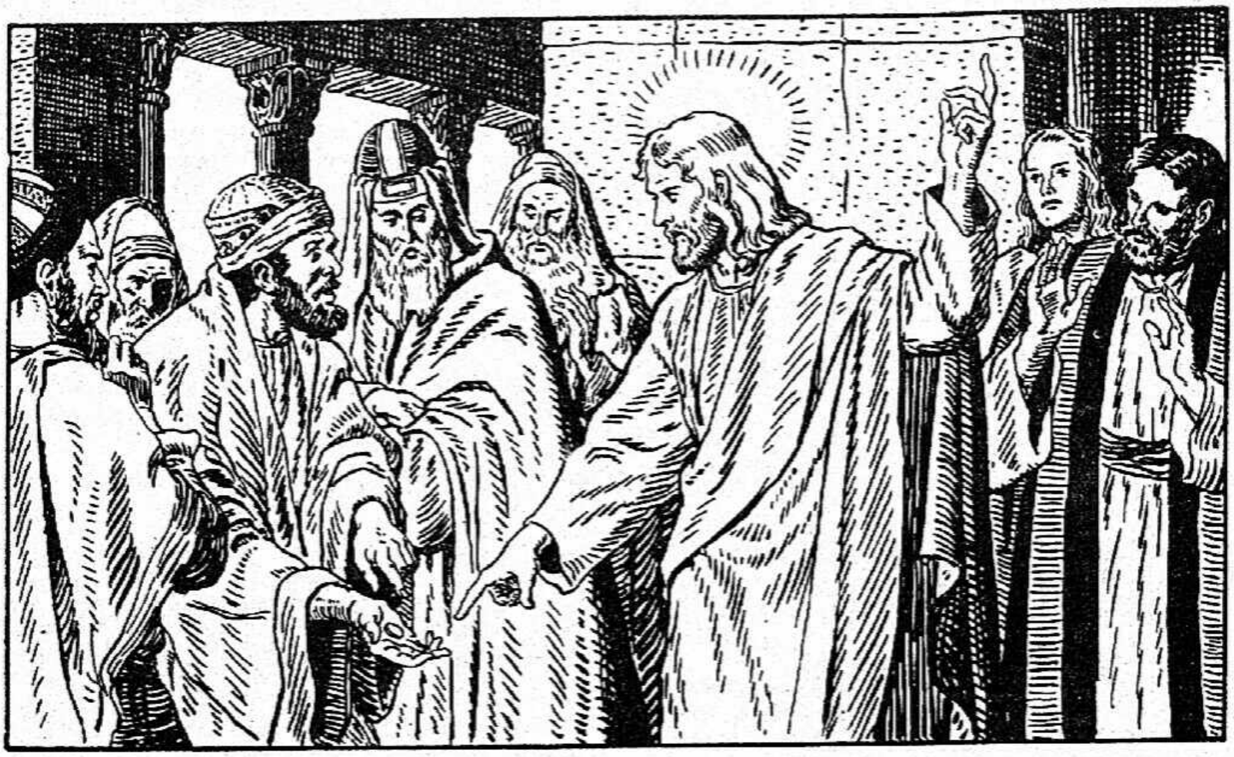
In business, the proprietor must be just to all under him, pay a living wage, and be absolutely honest in his dealings with customers and others.

4. Catholic Action is concerned with the ***civil*** life; however, it is *above and beyond* partisan politics. It does not engage in political squabbles.

Catholic Action is for a supernatural end, but it cannot be divorced from civil society, since it is concerned with souls who are members of the civil society. It permits what the Church permits; each member may belong to whatever lawful political party he may choose, provided he acts according to Christian principles. The voter must vote only for honest and capable officials. The official, in turn, must think only of the spiritual and material good of the body he is serving, and forget selfish ends.

5. There is ***variety*** in the works of Catholic Action, and in the means it uses to effect its ends. This variety is according to necessities of time and place.

One place may demand the teaching of catechism; another, the support of the parochial school; another, the defense of the Church's rights against unjust and unlawful impositions of civil officials; another, vigilance over the press and the moving pictures; another, the education of the working classes. In many places, all or most of these necessities, with others, ought to be met. This is why an organization of well-trained laity is imperative.



Once the Pharisees asked Our Lord: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?" Our Lord asked for a coin and then inquired, "Whose image and inscription does it bear?" They answered, "Caesar's." And Our Lord said: "Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Thus we are taught to give both the State and the Church what is due to each, in accordance with the end that each pursues.

64. Church and State

What are the spheres of the Church and of the State?—The spheres of the Church and of the State are defined and dictated by each one's respective purpose.

Both the Church and the State derive their just powers from God. All rights and duties on earth come to us ultimately *from God* through the Divine Law, either natural or positive. As Leo VIII said, "The Almighty has appointed the charge of the human race between two powers, the ecclesiastical and the civil, the one being set over divine, the other over human things."

1. The Church is a complete and perfect spiritual society whose purpose is to sanctify men and lead them to eternal happiness with God in heaven. In *spiritual* matters, therefore, it has absolute and exclusive powers.

The sphere of the Church is the supernatural and eternal; it includes everything relating to spiritual and moral affairs, matters affecting man's eternal salvation: for example, the worship of God, preaching of the Gospel, decision of what is morally right and morally wrong, government of its members, restriction of such rights as will endanger their eternal welfare, education of the clergy, religious education of its members, etc.

2. The State is also a society, but its purpose is limited to the promotion of man's temporal welfare. In purely *temporal* and *political* matters, the State is supreme. The Church does not prefer one form of civil government to another, provided it does not conflict with Catholic teaching.

The sphere of the State includes such purely temporal matters as a choice of a form of government, the development of agriculture, industries and trade, collection of taxes, restriction of certain civil and political rights (such as the right of suffrage, of bearing arms, etc.), the enforcement of law and order, etc.

3. Since both Church and State were established for the good of men, they cannot be totally separated without evil consequences. Even when a complete separation is advisable, it should *never mean the antagonism* of the State against the Church.

Man and the State, even in the realm of politics and temporal matters, are under God's law, both revealed and natural, the Law that is above all mankind, of whatever race. Man has *no right* to make his own laws without regard for the law of God. "It is the Church, not the State, that is to be man's guide to heaven" (*Leo XIII*). The State is even bound to protect the Church in the exercise of its functions; this is because the State must protect the rights of its citizens, and of these rights the religious ones are of utmost importance.

4. Although primarily concerned with spiritual matters, the Church evidently is entitled to certain *temporal aids*, in order to be able to pursue its mission effectively.

It must build churches and seminaries, collect revenue, conduct schools for the proper religious training of its members, etc.

5. The State, as representing the collective will of the people, cannot be made *god*, as is done in communism and fascism.

Then man becomes grossly material, bound by rods of his own fashioning, helpless and gone mad, because he cannot conquer the world.

What is the contribution of the Catholic Church to American democracy? — In general we may say that the fundamentals of American democracy were derived from traditional thought and philosophy; and since these, being of Western Europe, were essentially Catholic, therefore our democracy had its roots in the Catholic Church.

1. The philosophical *principles* of the Declaration of Independence show such a remarkable similarity to traditional Catholic philosophy as to have been derived from it. Most particularly have these principles been inherited from two outstanding Catholic theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and St. Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621). These principles are inflexible against Communism as well as Plutocracy, State Socialism as well as extreme Individualism.

Some principles so derived are: the equality of man in nature and essence, the function of government to care for the common good, the consent of the governed as a requirement for power of rulers, the right of people to change governments, etc.

2. Not only did our democracy get rooted in Catholic principles; today Catholic thought *continues to nourish* that democracy.

For this reason the Church insists on the sanctity of marriage, of the family; the Church instructs her children in loyalty to the State.

3. In the founding of our Republic, Catholic aid also came into the realm of *deeds*. Many Catholics took part in the war for independence not only by actual fighting, but by contributing money, services, and other resources. And we must not forget that France, a Catholic nation, sent four fleets, besides money and soldiers. Poland and Spain, Catholic countries, also gave aid.

Well did our First President say to Catholics: "I presume that your fellow citizens . . . will not forget the patriotic part you took in the accomplishment of our Revolution and the establishment of our government."

What should be the attitude of the Catholic citizen towards the State?—The Catholic citizen is bound in conscience to obey the State, provided faith and morals are not endangered thereby.

1. The State is not the master, but the servant, of the citizens. The inherent *rights of individuals,* and particularly of parents, cannot be usurped by the State.

For instance, parents, not the State, have the natural right to educate their children. The State should merely supervise and facilitate education, but should not enact laws contrary to the obligations of parents to give their children a religious education.

2. After the Revolution, for a considerable period, Catholic schools together with schools of other denominations received government support. Then gradually, laws were passed forbidding such support.

The 1938 report of the Advisory Committee on Education created by President Roosevelt said: "In view of the fact that non-public schools are saving the nation such great sums of money, the Committee recommends that where federal aid is used for such incidental services as the provision of reading materials, the transportation of pupils, the care of health, and scholarships, it shall be made available to all the children of the nation, whether they are in public schools or not." However, today government support of Catholic children's education is limited to free bus transportation in 17 States, and free textbooks in 6 States.

3. In questions of right and wrong, what should rule is *not the majority, but the right*, even if it is upheld by the smallest of minorities.

For example, even if 90% of the population should vote for poisoning the children with indecent literature and pictures, the corrupt majority should not rule, but the just and enlightened minority.

(Particular topics related to this are discussed in various Commandments of God and the Church.)

Eminent Catholics

The pages of history are filled with the names of Catholics outstanding in literature, science, art, progress, and learning of every description. The following is only a partial list of those who were known alike for their devotion to the Catholic Faith and their contributions to art and science.

Astronomy: Cassini, Clavius, Copernicus, DeVico, Galileo, Gassendi, La Place, Piazzi, Secchi, Wallingfurt.

Biology: Bernard, Carnoy, Detussien, Fabre, Latrelle, O'Dwyer, Schwann, Windle.

Botany: Cesalpinus, Mendel, Charles and Louis Tulasne.

Chemistry: Agricola, Becquerel, Chevreul, Despretz, Dumas, Hauy, Lavoisier, Paracelsus, Pasteur, Schwarz, Valentine, Van Helmont.

Electricity: Ampere, Carre, Casselli, Cerobotani, Coulomb, Faucault, Galvani, Glynn, Gordon, Gramme, Nollet, Marconi, Plante, Volta.

Geology: Collona, Delauny, Harey, Muller, Spada, Stensen.

Mathematics: Borgo, Boscovitch, Cauchy, Charles, Ferrari, Monge, Planudes, Sestini, Vieta.

Mechanics: Boselli, Burke, Castelli, Charpentier, Jouffrey, Mariotte, Pascal.

Music: Bellini, Elgar, Gounod, Haydn, Mascagni, Mozart, Palestrina, Perosi, Verdi.

Medicine: Avenbrugger, Columbus, De Chauliac, Fabricius, Lancist, Morgagni, Muller, Murphy, Pasteur, Santorio, Theodoric, Vesalius.

Navigation and Exploration: Balboa, Butler, Cabot, Columbus, De Soto, Cortes, Durer, Hennepin, Magellan, Marco Polo, Marquette, Orellana, Ponce de Leon, Santa Cruz.

Painting and Sculpture: Fra Angelico, Bernini, Canova, Correggio, Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Murillo, Raphael, Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, Titian, Velasquez.

Physics: Babinet, Bacon, Biot, Dulong, Fresnel, Fizeau, Grimaldi, Malus, Mollet, Plateau, Regnalt, Schwann, Zamboni.

Printing: Guttenberg, Mergenthaler.

Warfare: Barry, Castellan, Foch, Joffre, Petain, Sobieski.

65. Services of the Church to the State

Of what benefit is the Church to the State?—The Church is essential for the welfare of the State, for it upholds the government, directs its members to obey just laws, prevents crimes, incites to the practice of civic virtues, encourages to noble endeavour, and unites different nations in one brotherhood.

1. There is *no better citizen* than a good Catholic. He obeys the State because his religion teaches him that all lawful authority comes from God.

Who can be a more law-abiding citizen than one who looks upon civil officials as *superiors* that God Himself bids him obey? Plutarch says that religion is a better protection for a city than its walls.

2. The Church teaches its children to make *sacrifices for the common good.* Thus it trains unselfish, thrifty, and industrious members of the State. A man with no religion seldom makes a good citizen. He is liable to try always to get as much as he can even at the expense of others. A man without religion generally ends without any morality whatever.

The prisons are in general peopled, not by practising members of the Church, but by people who neglected religion. Only God knows the number of those who have been turned from the paths of sin and crime on account of their connection with the Church.

3. The Church not only prevents crimes, but incites to *works of charity.*

It teaches the merit of works of mercy. From its teachings bud forth orphanages, schools, hospitals, social service, etc.

4. The greatest statesmen and patriots have recognized the *necessity of religion* in the State. Without religion among its citizens, the State would soon collapse. The Catholic Church teaches the best religion, the one taught by God Himself.

Washington said: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, *religion and morality* are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens." Machiavelli wrote: "The surest sign of ruin in a State is the neglect of religion." Napoleon himself confessed that no nation could endure without religion.

5. By a common profession of faith, a common membership in the same body, and by the commandment of charity, the Church binds different nations in *one brotherhood,* the brotherhood of men, children of one God. Such a feeling of brotherhood would help greatly towards eliminating sectional and racial prejudices and strife.

Is it not a historical fact that national quarrels and wars have increased since the division of Christendom into sects? Today the term "brotherhood of men" seems to be a mere figure of speech in which most people have no faith.

What has the Church actually accomplished for the State during the over nineteen hundred years of its existence? —The history of all civilized nations gives ample testimony to the valuable services of the Church to civil government during a period of over nineteen hundred years.

1. The greatest accomplishment of the Church was the *Christianization of Europe.* From thence we have derived whatever we today call "civilization". If we compare the truly Christian civilization with pagan life and culture, we can see the greatness of the service the Church has rendered the State.

Ignorance and immorality are usually partners; for this reason the Church eagerly promotes culture. The Church looks upon the world as coming from the hand of God; therefore the Church is interested in science.

2. The Church has always striven to provide schools for the *education* of the young; it founded great universities.

From the very beginning, the missions, parishes, monasteries, and cathedrals had schools. No less than 80 universities were built in the days when the Pope was supreme in Christendom; of these many still exist, though under different control. The encouragement given by the Popes advanced education, medicine, surgery, literature, chemistry, mathematics, and other sciences. Numerous religious orders and congregations have from earliest times devoted themselves to education.

3. The Church *preserved the great works* of ancient heathen philosophers and historians, saving them from destruction for future ages.

In the Middle Ages, before the invention of printing, monks patiently and carefully copied and transcribed the ancient works. Their zeal for learning built up great libraries and museums. The most profound and prolific authors were Catholic.

4. So great a *patron of art* and architecture is the Church that a saying became current: "There is no art outside the Catholic Church." Practically all the world's classic painters have been members of the Church, and were supported in their work by the Popes. We need only mention Raphael, da Vinci, and Michelangelo.

To this day thousands of tourists every year gaze in wonder at the great cathedrals of the Middle Ages, which stand unsurpassed. The Popes encouraged musicians like Palestrina. Plain chant, or Gregorian music, comes to us from St. Ambrose and St. Gregory the Great. The noblest musical works are products of the genius of sons of the Church, of whom we need mention only Gounod, Haydn, Mozart, Verdi.

5. Priests and monks, not to mention lay members of the Church, have contributed some of the *greatest discoveries* to human knowledge.

In physical science, the deacon Gioja discovered the magnet and compass; the Jesuit Kircher experimented with the first burning glass; the canon Copernicus taught his famous system; the Jesuit Cavaliere worked out the components of white light; the Jesuit Secchi made fruitful studies concerning sunspots; the Franciscan Berthold Schwarz discovered gunpowder. Other scientific works by priests and monks: the Dominican Spina discovered the use of spectacles; the Benedictine Pontius invented a method of teaching deaf-mutes; the Dominican Calandoni invented a typesetter to take the place of the compositor; the monk Veit discovered the scale and rules of harmony in music. Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar.

6. The Church helped establish free and *stable governments;* it civilized the barbarians. Through the Benedictines, Cistercians, and Trappists, it reclaimed whole tracts of waste lands. The Church cared for the poor, the sick, the orphaned, the old and helpless. It opened hospitals, ransomed captives, and freed slaves. Pope Innocent III is known as "Father of Hospitals".

Who but the Church insited on the *dignity* of the soul of even the poorest slave in an age when class distinctions were rampant? Who but the Church rescued *woman* from degradation, and formed that beautiful institution, the Christian family? The Church stood for the *liberties* of the people against the encroachments of tyrants. It has ever stood for the *poor* against the oppressions of the rich. It has stood for the maintenance of *authority* against the violence of rebellious subjects. The whole history of ***Christian civilization*** has the mark of the Church.

POPES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

	End of reign
St. Peter	67
St. Linus, m.	76
St. Anacletus (Cletus), m.	88
St. Clement I, m.	97
St. Evaristus, m.	105
St. Alexander I, m.	115
St. Sixtus I, m.	125
St. Telesphorus, m.	136
St. Hyginus, m.	140
St. Pius I, m.	155
St. Anicetus, m.	166
St. Soterus, m.	175
St. Eleutherius, m.	189
St. Victor I, m.	199
St. Zephyrinus, m.	217
St. Callistus I, m.	222
St. Urban I, m.	230
St. Pontian, m.	235
St. Anterus, m.	236
St. Fabian, m.	250
St. Cornelius, m.	253
St. Lucius I, m.	254
St. Stephen I, m.	257
St. Sixtus II, m.	258
St. Dionysius	268
St. Felix I, m.	274
St. Eutychian, m.	283
St. Caius, m.	296
St. Marcellinus, m.	304
St. Marcellus I, m.	309
St. Eusebius, m.	309
St. Melchiades, m.	314
St. Sylvester I	335
St. Mark	336
St. Julius I	352
Liberius	366
St. Damasus I	384
St. Siricius	399
St. Anastasius I	401
St. Innocent I	417
St. Zozimus	418
St. Boniface I	422
St. Celestine I	432
St. Sixtus III	440
St. Leo I (the Great)	461
St. Hilary	468
St. Simplicius	483
St. Felix III (II)	492
St. Gelasius I	496
Anastasius II	498
St. Symmachus	514
St. Hormisdas	523
St. John I, m.	526
St. Felix IV (III)	530
Boniface II	532
John II	535
St. Agapitus I	536
St. Silverius, m.	537
Vigilius	555
Pelagius I	561
John III	574
Benedict I	579
Pelagius II	590
St. Gregory I (the Great)	604
Sabinianus	606
Boniface III	607
St. Boniface IV	615
St. Deusdedit (Adeodatus I)	618
Boniface V	625
Honorius I	638
Severinus	640
John IV	642
Theodore I	649
St. Martin I, m.	655
St. Eugene I	657
St. Vitalian	672
Adeodatus II	676
Donus I	678
St. Agatho	681
St. Leo II	683
St. Benedict II	685
John V	686
Conon	687
St. Sergius I	701
John VI	705
John VII	707
Sisinnius	708
Constantine	715
St. Gregory II	731
St. Gregory III	741
St. Zachary	752
Stephen II	752
Stephen III	757
St. Paul I	767
Stephen IV	772
Adrian I	795
St. Leo III	816
Stephen V	817
St. Paschal I	824
Eugene II	827
Valentine	827
Gregory IV	844
Sergius II	847
St. Leo IV	855
Benedict III	858
St. Nicholas I	867
Adrian II	872
John VIII	882
Marinus I	884
St. Adrian III	885
Stephen VI	891
Formosus	896
Boniface VI	896
Stephen VII	897
Romanus	897
Theodore II	897
John IX	900
Benedict IV	903
Leo V	903
Sergius III	911
Anastasius III	913
Landus	914
John X	928
Leo VI	928
Stephen VIII	931
John XI	935
Leo VII	939
Stephen IX	942
Marinus II	946
Agapitus II	955
John XII	964
Leo VIII	965
Benedict V	966
John XIII	972
Benedict VI	974
Benedict VII	983
John XIV	984
John XV	996
Gregory V	999
Sylvester II	1003
John XVII	1003
John XVIII	1009
Sergius IV	1012
Benedict VIII	1024
John XIX	1032
Benedict IX (*1st reign*)	1044
Sylvester III	1045
Benedict IX (*2nd reign*)	1045
Gregory VI	1046
Clement II	1047
Benedict IX (*3rd reign*)	1048
Damasus II	1048
St. Leo IX	1054
Victor II	1057
Stephen X	1058
Nicholas II	1061
Alexander II	1073
St. Gregory VII	1085
Bl. Victor III	1087
Bl. Urban II	1099
Paschal II	1118
Gelasius II	1119
Callistus II	1124
Honorius II	1130
Innocent II	1143
Celestine II	1144
Lucius II	1145
Bl. Eugene III	1153
Anastasius IV	1154
Adrian IV	1159
Alexander III	1181
Lucius III	1185
Urban III	1187
Gregory VIII	1187
Clement III	1191
Celestine III	1198
Innocent III	1216
Honorius III	1227
Gregory IX	1241
Celestine IV	1241
Innocent IV	1254
Alexander IV	1261
Urban IV	1264
Clement IV	1268
Bl. Gregory X	1276
Bl. Innocent V	1276
Adrian V	1276
John XXI	1277
Nicholas III	1280
Martin IV	1285
Honorius IV	1287
Nicholas IV	1292
St. Celestine V	1294
Boniface VIII	1303
Bl. Benedict XI	1304
Clement V	1314
John XXII	1334
Benedict XII	1342
Clement VI	1352
Innocent VI	1362
Bl. Urban V	1370
Gregory XI	1378
Urban VI	1389
Boniface IX	1404
Innocent VII	1406
Gregory XII	1415
Martin V	1431
Eugene IV	1447
Nicholas V	1455
Callistus III	1458
Pius II	1464
Paul II	1471
Sixtus IV	1484
Innocent VIII	1492
Alexander VI	1503
Pius III	1503
Julius II	1513
Leo X	1521
Adrian VI	1523
Clement VII	1534
Paul III	1549
Julius III	1555
Marcellus II	1555
Paul IV	1559
Pius IV	1565
St. Pius V	1572
Gregory XIII	1585
Sixtus V	1590
Urban VII	1590
Gregory XIV	1591
Innocent IX	1591
Clement VIII	1605
Leo XI	1605
Paul V	1621
Gregory XV	1623
Urban VIII	1644
Innocent X	1655
Alexander VII	1667
Clement IX	1669
Clement X	1676
Innocent XI	1689
Alexander VIII	1691
Innocent XII	1700
Clement XI	1721
Innocent XIII	1724
Benedict XIII	1730
Clement XII	1740
Benedict XIV	1758
Clement XIII	1769
Clement XIV	1774
Pius VI	1799
Pius VII	1823
Leo XII	1829
Pius VIII	1830
Gregory XVI	1846
Pius IX	1878
Leo XIII	1903
Bl. Pius X	1914
Benedict XV	1922
Pius XI	1939
Pius XII	

66. Authority of the Church

What are the chief attributes of the Catholic Church?—The chief attributes of the Catholic Church are authority, infallibility, and indefectibility.

An *attribute* is any quality or characteristic. Virtues as well as faults are attributes.

What is meant by the authority of the Catholic Church?—By the authority of the Catholic Church is meant that the Pope and the bishops, as the lawful successors of the Apostles, have power from Christ Himself to teach, to sanctify, and to govern the faithful in spiritual matters.

Authority is the power one person has over another, such that he can exact obedience justly. Thus rulers have authority over subjects; parents over their children; teachers, over pupils, etc.

1. Christ appointed the Church to *teach* whatever He taught: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, . . . *teaching* them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19).

Christ taught, as in the Sermon on the Mount.

2. Christ appointed the Church to *sanctify* the faithful, by administering the means of grace to its members.

Christ dispensed the means of grace, as when He forgave Mary Magdalen, gave His flesh and blood at the Last Supper, and blessed little children.

3. Christ appointed the Church to *govern* with authority and jurisdiction.

Christ was the pastor or ruler of men. He gave commandments, sent the disciples on missions, instructed them, reproved the Pharisees.

Did Christ give the Church full authority? — Christ gave the Church full authority and power, saying, "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

As a father who goes away on a journey leaves all his power and authority to the mother, so Christ upon leaving the earth gave to His Church full power and authority to carry on His work. "He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me" (Luke 10:16).

1. The authority of the Church is *not restricted* to matters of doctrine and belief, but to whatever is necessary for the good of the Church and its members.

Thus the Church lays down laws concerning fasting and abstinence, keeping of Sundays and holydays, worship, and administration of the sacraments.

2. The members of the Church *must observe* whatever laws and regulations it makes. Authority in some form is necessary for every organization; without it members could not be directed to their common purpose.

Every society lays down rules for its members. Those who do not wish to keep them are excluded from it. Without authority the Church could not fulfill its divine purpose. The denominations that broke from the unity of the Church denied its authority. Having no head to obey, they split and resplit into hundreds of churches.

How does the Church exercise her authority to teach, to sanctify, and to govern the faithful?—The Church exercises her authority to teach, to sanctify, and to govern the faithful by various means, among them being:

1. *Teaching* by sermons and by religious classes in schools and parishes.

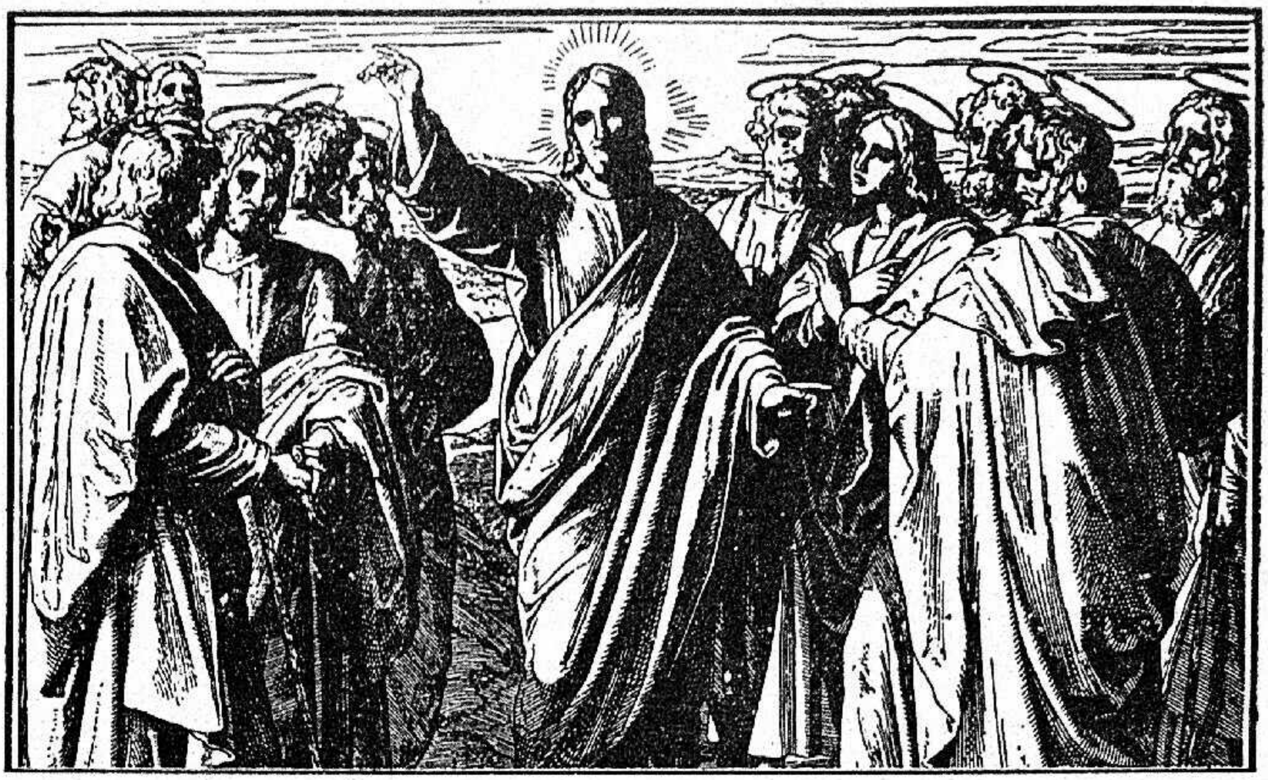
Today the Church *teaches* by preaching, by deciding controversies, and by condemning wrong teaching. Parish churches have sermons in the Masses of Sundays and holydays of obligation. Every Catholic school prescribes the study of religion in every class. Every parish holds catechetical classes.

2. *Sanctifying* by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by the sacraments, by blessings, and by special devotions held in the churches.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, instituted by Our Lord Himself, is the great act of worship of the Church, the source of grace to sanctify the faithful. The sacraments are means of grace by which we obtain help to become more holy children of God.

3. *Governing* by the commandments of the Church, by other laws ordered from time to time as need arises, and from the general control by bishops in the dioceses.

In her capacity as ruler, the Church makes regulations forbidding what is dangerous or sinful, as when she prohibits the reading of dangerous books and magazines. All members of the Church are under a strict obligation to obey her laws and regulations; disobedience to the Church is disobedience to Him Who authorized her rule, Jesus Christ, God.



The Church cannot teach error, because it was founded by Christ, God Himself. He sent forth His Apostles with full powers to preach His Gospel. He said: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21). "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to dwell with you forever. . . . But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your mind whatever I have said to you" (John 14:16, 26).

67. Infallibility of the Church

What is meant by the infallibility of the Catholic Church?—By the infallibility of the Catholic Church is meant that the Church, by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost, cannot err when it teaches or believes a doctrine of faith and morals.

Christ promised: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, *I am with you all days*, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:20). If Christ is with the Church all days, it cannot err in teaching; it cannot lead men away from God.

1. "Infallibility" is often distorted by enemies of the Church to mean "impeccability", and therefore derided. ***Infallibility*** is freedom from ***error***; *impeccability* is freedom from *sin*. In an institution established by God for the salvation of men, error in doctrine is unthinkable.

Every teacher in the Church, from the Pope down to the humblest priest, like all of the faithful, is capable of falling into sin. But in the Catholic Church, because of the promise of Infallibility, the Holy Ghost cannot permit the purity of a single *doctrine* to be stained.

2. Jesus Christ ***promised*** to preserve the Church from error. If His prediction and promises were false, then He would not be God, since God cannot lie. Christ said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell *shall not prevail* against it." If therefore the Church falls into error, the gates of hell certainly would prevail against it.

Christ promised: "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Advocate to *dwell with you forever* . . . He will teach you all the truth" (John 14). If the Church can err, then the Holy Ghost cannot abide in it and Christ has failed to keep His promise—a thing absolutely impossible.

3. A doctrine of faith is something we must *believe* in order to be saved. A doctrine of morals is something we must *do* in order to be saved.

For example, we must *believe* the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity: that there are Three Divine Persons in One God. We must believe that Jesus Christ is God. We must believe in the Blessed Virgin Mary's immaculate conception.

Of things we must *do* are these: we must go to Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation; we must fast and abstain when our bishops so order; we must receive Holy Communion at least once a year. We must obey the Ten Commandments.

4. Jesus Christ ***commanded*** all men to *listen* to and *obey* the Church, under pain of damnation. If His Church can teach error, then He is responsible for the error, by commanding all to obey.

Jesus sent forth His Apostles with full powers to preach His Gospel: *"As the Father* hath sent Me, *I also* send you." — "Make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."—"Preach the Gospel to every creature."

(a) Christ said: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). A just God could not command men under penalty of damnation to believe what is false. So the teaching of the Church must be infallibly true.

He said: "You shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Since it was physically impossible for the Apostles to preach to the whole world, the mission must have been intended also for their successors to the end of time, our Catholic Bishops and priests.

(b) Christ said: "If he refuse to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. 18:17). "He who hears you hears me; and he who rejects you rejects me; and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Luke 10:16).

He said, "And whoever does not receive you, or listen to your words—go forth outside that house or town, and shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that town" (Matt. 10:14-16).

5. No Christian denies that the *Apostles* were infallible. In fact, in the first century, they were the only authority in the Church. The Bible was not completed till the end of that century, not within reach of all.

But God loves the Christians of today as much as He did the primitive Christians. We have as much need of unerring teachers as they. The Apostolic Church of the 20th century must therefore be as infallible as the Apostolic Church.

6. An infallible Bible is *no use* without an ***infallible interpreter.*** History has proved this, in the multiplication of the innumerable denominations that deny the infallibility of the Church. By infallibility, the faithful know exactly what to believe and what to do in order that they may be pleasing to God and save their souls. They have surety; they need suffer no doctrinal doubt.

It is a great blessing that, in the midst of the everchanging views of men and the conflict of human opinion, there is one voice crying out in unerring tones: *"Thus saith the Lord."*

Has the Church in fact proved itself infallible?—It is a historical fact that the Catholic Church, from the twentieth century back to the first, has not once ceased to teach a doctrine on faith or morals previously held, and with the same interpretation; the Church has proved itself infallible.

1. It is a *historical fact* that not one Pope, whatever he was in his private life, has ever taught error.

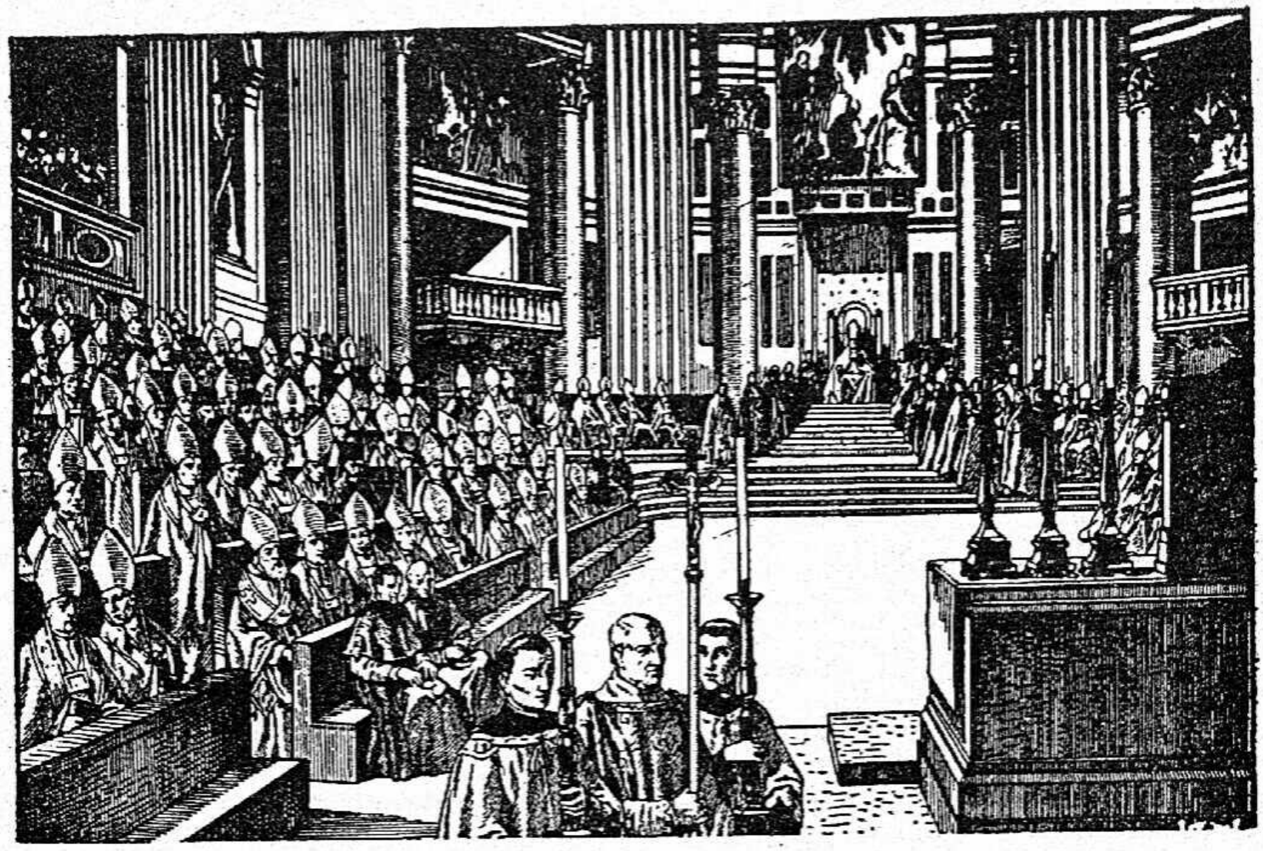
"The Scribes and the Pharisees have sat on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, that they command you, observe and do. But do not act according to their works." By obeying the Pope; every Christian can live as Christ commanded, in any age.

2. True, some high rulers of the Church have gravely sinned. Nevertheless, enemies of the Church have exaggerated even the lack of impeccability. In the long line of Popes the vast majority led virtuous lives. Many of them are honored as Saints and martyrs. The enemies of the Church can bring charges against only five or six Popes: Most of the charges are calumnies or exaggerations. But even if the charges were true, they prove nothing against *infallibility.*

Of the Sovereign Pontiffs that have succeeded Peter, 83 are canonized *Saints,* of whom 32 were martyrs. However holy the Pope, he regularly goes to *confession* to a priest. No Pope ever considers himself above the laws of the Church and of God.

3. The Church ***cannot change*** its teachings on faith and morals. But it may restate the doctrines more clearly and completely. Year after year the Church proclaims the same *unchanging* doctrines. Her doctrines need *no reform,* for they are of Divine origin, the work of the Incarnate God.

No Pope or general Council in almost two thousand years has annulled or revoked a single decree of faith or morals enacted by a previous Pope or Council. ***This is history.***



Since the time of Christ, from the first council of the Apostles in Jerusalem in the year 50, to the last Vatican Council in 1870, there have been held in all twenty-one general or ecumenical councils. The Vatican Council, shown above, declared the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope.

68. Sphere of Infallibility

When does the Church teach infallibly? —The Church teaches infallibly when it defines, through the Pope alone, as the teacher of all Christians, or through the Pope and the bishops, a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by all the faithful.

The Church, as the representative or substitute of Jesus Christ on earth, is infallible, and speaks with His own words: "This is why I was born, and why I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37).

1. When the Church makes an infallible pronouncement, we are not to suppose that a new doctrine is being introduced. For instance, when the Holy Father in 1854 defined the Blessed Virgin's Immaculate Conception as an article of faith, the infallible definition was not a proclamation of a new doctrine, but was merely an announcement of an article of faith *true from the very beginning,* and publicly defined only in order to make the dogma clear to all and to be believed as part of the deposit of faith left to the Church.

Another example is the definition of the Holy Father's infallibility, made in 1870 by the Vatican Council. The dogma was true from the very beginning, and had been universally held. But as in recent times many objections were being made against it, the Bishops in the Vatican Council thought it best, in order to make clear the stand of the Church, to make an infallible definition.

2. The Church makes infallible *pronouncements* on doctrines of faith and morals, on their interpretation, on the Bible and Tradition, and the interpretation of any part or parts of these. The dogma of the Inmaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin was an interpretation of a long-standing Tradition in the Church.

The Church also pronounces on the truth or falsity of opinions, teachings, customs, etc., with relation to fundamental doctrines. Another subject on which the Church makes infallible declarations is in the canonization of Saints. All whom the

Church has raised to the glory of the altar by a solemn canonization are undoubtedly now in heaven, enjoying eternal bliss in the presence of God.

When does the Church teach infallibly through the Pope alone?—The Church teaches infallibly through the Pope alone, when he speaks officially (*ex cathedra*) as the Supreme Head, for the entire universal Church.

As the Pope has authority over the Church, he could not err in his *official* teaching without leading the Church into error. As Our Lord said to Peter, the first Pope: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32).

In order to speak infallibly, the Pope must speak ***ex-cathedra,*** or ***officially,*** under the following conditions:

1. He must pronounce himself on a subject of faith or morals. Infallibility is restricted to questions regarding *faith and morals.* The Church pronounces on natural sciences and on legislation only when the perversity of men makes of them instruments for opposing revealed truths.

If the Pope should make judgments on mathematics or civil governments, he is as liable to error as any other man with the same experience. Letters to kings and other rulers are not infallible pronouncements. However, we should hold the Pope's opinions on any subject with great respect, on account of his position and experience.

2. He must speak as the Vicar of Christ, in his office as Pope, and *to the whole Church,* to all the faithful throughout the world. He can teach without speaking infallibly, as in his encyclical letters. We accept such teachings not on faith, but in obedience to him, in respect for his wisdom.

Should the Pope, like Benedict XIV, write a treatise on Canon Law, his book would be written in a private capacity, and liable to error, just as the books of other theologians.

3. He must make clear by certain words his intention to speak *ex-cathedra.* These words are most often used: "We proclaim," "We define," etc.

The Pope's infallible decrees are termed "doctrinal," since they involve doctrine. From the earliest days of the Church, the infallibility of the Pope has been acknowledged. In the year 417 the Holy See condemned the Pelagian errors; St. Augustine cried out the famous words, "Rome has spoken; the cause is ended!" The Council of Florence in 1439 called the Pope "the Father and Teacher of Christians."

When does the Church teach infallibly through the Pope and the bishops?—The Church teaches infallibly through the Pope and the bishops when convened in a general (or ecumenical) council.

1. A ***General Council*** is an assembly convened by the Holy See, of all the bishops of the world, and others entitled to vote. It represents the teaching body of the Church, and must be infallible.

In the year 50 the Apostles held the first General Council in Jerusalem. Its decisions were proclaimed as coming from God, the final decree beginning with these words: "For the Holy Spirit and we have decided to lay no further burden upon you" (Acts 15:28).

2. Over a General Council, the Pope or his legate *presides;* a representative number of bishops and others entitled to vote, such as cardinals, abbots, and generals of certain religious orders, must be present. Upon *confirmation* by the Pope, a General Council's decrees are binding on all Christians.

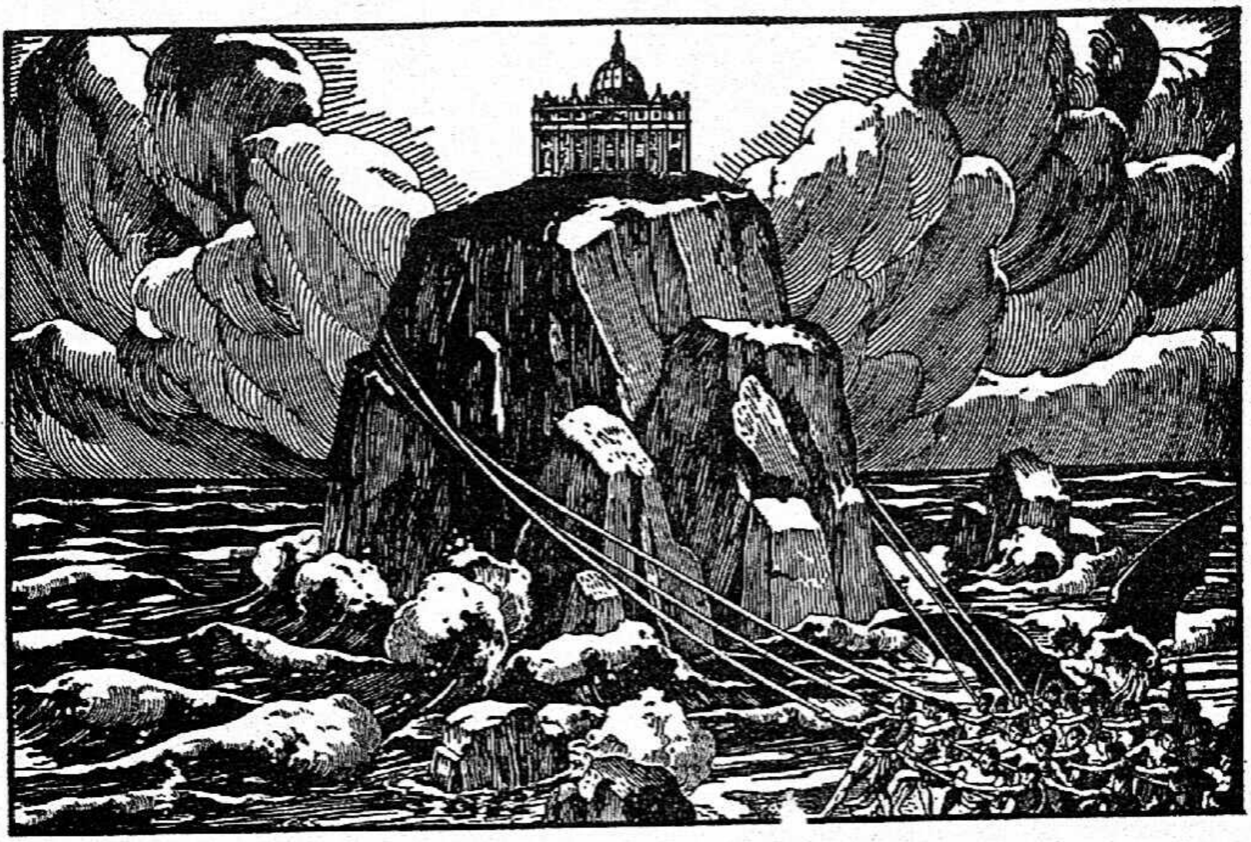
It must be understood that the decrees of a General Council have no binding authority until confirmed by the Pope. There is ***no appeal*** from the Pope to a General Council.

3. A unanimous vote is *not necessary* for an infallible decision of a general council; a great majority is sufficient.

The most notable of the General Councils so far held following the Council of Jerusalem have been: (1) the Council of Nicea, in the year 325, which pronounced against the heresy of Arius; (2) the Council of Ephesus, in the year 425, which declared Mary the Mother of God; (3) the Council of Nicea, in 787, which declared the veneration of images as lawful and profitable; (4) the Council of Trent, 1545-1563, which declared against the heresies of Luther; (5) the Council of the Vatican, 1870, which defined as an article of faith the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope.

4. Even when the bishops are not gathered together in one place, they form the teaching body of the Church, *united with the Pope.* Therefore their voice must be infallible, otherwise the universal Church would be led into error. For the same reason as above, the daily ordinary uniform teaching of the Church in every place in the whole world is infallibly true.

"Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).



The Catholic Church will endure to the end of time, for it is founded on a rock. The powers of evil will beat in vain against it. They will break themselves and perish, but the Church will remain, indefectible.

The testimony of almost two thousand years proves the perpetuity of the Church. Nothing that malice and envy could invent; nothing that the world, the flesh, and the devil could do have been left untried in the past 1900 years. Still the Church is with us, exactly as Christ founded it, and stronger than ever.

69. Indefectibility of the Church

What is meant by the indefectibility of the Catholic Church?—By the indefectibility of the Catholic Church is meant that the Church, as Christ founded it, will last until the end of time.

The Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary that Christ "shall be king over the house of Jacob *forever;* and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

1. Christ meant His Church to endure to the end of the world. It is to be indestructible and unchanging,—to possess *indefectibility.* Christ, God Himself, could scarcely have come, and with such incredible pain and labor have founded a Church which would die with the Apostles.

He came *to save all men.* Those to live in future ages needed salvation as much as the people of Apostolic times.

2. Christ said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell *shall not prevail* against it" (Matt. 16:18). By the ***"gates of hell"***, He meant all the power of the devil—all kinds of attacks, physical violence as well as false teaching.

Christ promises here that the Church would be assailed always, but never overcome. This promise of Our Lord has been *proved* for almost 2000 years by the facts of history. *Not one* of the persecutors of the Church has prevailed over it. On the contrary, many of them have come to a fearful end. There will always be Popes, bishops, and laity, to compose the Church; the truths taught by Our Lord will always be found in His Church.

3. After telling His Apostles to teach all nations, Christ said: "Behold, I am with you all days, even *unto the consummation* of the world" (Matt. 28:20).

As the Apostles were not to live to the end of the world, Christ must have been addressing them as representatives of a perpetual Church.

4. The Apostles themselves understood Christ to mean that His Church should endure. After organizing Christian communities, they appointed *successors* in their place, to live after them and carry on the Church.

The Apostles instructed these successors to ordain in turn other bishops and priests. All these acts were *to assure the perpetuity* of the Church.

5. Christ intended the Church to remain *as He founded it,* to preserve the whole of what He taught, and the shining marks which He gave it in the beginning. If the Church lost any of the qualities that God gave it, it could not be said to be indefectible, because it would not be the same institution. Indefectibility implies *unchangeability.*

Our Lord promised to abide by the Church, to assist it, and to send the Holy Ghost to remain in it. God does not change: "Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:20).

6. Because of its indefectibility the truths revealed by God will *always be taught* in the Catholic Church. St. Ambrose said: "The Church is like the moon; it may wane, but never be destroyed; it may be darkened, but it can never disappear."

St. Anselm said that the bark of the Church may be swept by the waves, but it can never sink, because Christ is there. When the Church is in greatest need, Christ comes to its help by miracles, or by raising up saintly men to strengthen and purify it. It is the bark of Peter; when the storm threatens to sink it, the Lord awakens from His sleep, and commands the winds and the waves into calm: "Peace; be still!"

Has the Catholic Church actually proved itself indefectible?—The Catholic Church has, throughout its long history, proved itself indefectible, against all kinds of attack from within and without, against every persecution and every heresy and schism.

As its Founder was persecuted, so the Catholic Church has been and ever will be persecuted. "You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake" (Matt. 10:18). "And you will be hated by all for my name's sake" (Matt. 10:22). "No disciple is above his teacher, nor is the servant above his master" (Matt. 10:24). "They will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues" (Mark 13:9). "They will arrest you, and persecute you" (Luke 21:12).

1. The Church survived *three hundred years* of incredible persecution under pagan Rome. Of the 33 Popes that ruled before the Edict of Milan, 30 died as martyrs. That mighty Empire, with its colossal strength, before whose standard the nations quailed, could not kill the infant Church or stop its progress. In a short time the Popes were ruling where the imperial Caesars had issued edicts against the Christian Church.

The Roman Empire waged ten fierce persecutions against the Church, but could not destroy it. In the year 313 the Emperor Constantine was converted, and granted the Church freedom by the Edict of Milan.

2. Then for *two centuries* hordes of barbarians swept upon civilized Europe, destroying the old Roman Empire. The Church not only survived, but converted and civilized the barbarians.

God's ever-watchful providence brought about the conversion of the Frankish king Clovis, with a great number of his warriors. This was the beginning of the firm establishment of the Church in the Frankish kingdom, although missionaries had gone there from the first century. In the eighth century St. Boniface converted Middle and Northern Germany, until then the home of violent paganism.

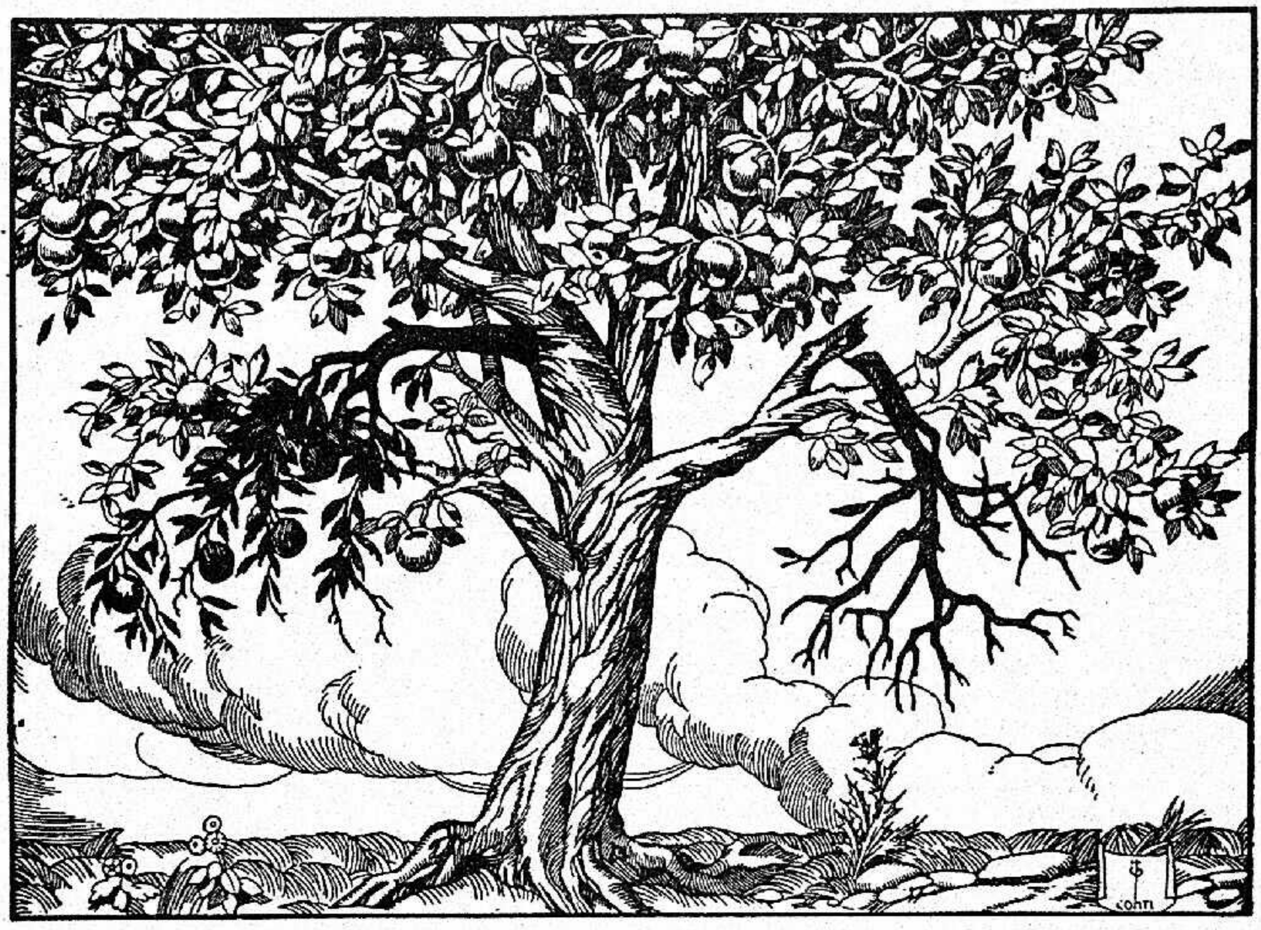
3. For *nine centuries* Mohammedanism threatened Christian civilization. It was the Church under the Popes that urged the nations to league against Mohammedanism.

In the sixteenth century the Mohammedan menace was removed.

4. Not only non-Christians, but its own *rebellious* children have persecuted the Church. From the beginning heresy has attacked it from within. And ***still*** the Church ***lives***, greater than ever, changeless, indefectible.

The long history of the Catholic Church is attended by schism and heresy, but each attack has only strengthened it. It has continued to live and spread in spite of everything and everybody.

5. The Church is the ***Bride of Christ***, cast into prison, starved, thrown to the beasts, trampled underfoot, hacked, tortured, crucified, and burned. But this fair Bride emerges from it all in the bloom and freshness of youth, serene, calm, immortal.



Christ said: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remain on the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he shall be cast outside as the branch and wither; and they shall gather them up and cast them into the fire, and they shall burn" (John 15:4-6).

Time has continually proved the truth of what Christ predicted about schisms and their divisions. This is the reason for the fact that they change so often and finally disappear: they are branches broken from the tree, and must wither as He said.

70. Salvation and the Catholic Church

What do we mean when we say, "Outside the Church there is no salvation?"— When we say, "Outside the Church there is no salvation", we mean that those who through their own grave fault do not know that the Catholic Church is the true Church, or knowing it, refuse to join it, cannot be saved.

1. All are obliged to belong to the Catholic Church in order to be saved. Christ said: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of *water* and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The Catholic Church is founded on the Apostles, to whom Our Lord gave the commission to baptize; by Baptism one is made a member of the Church. If then Baptism is *indispensable*, the Church must be indispensable.

2. Christ did not die for a part of, but for *all mankind*. He did not leave His legacy the Church for the benefit of a few, but for all. Our Lord said: "He who hears you hears me; and he who rejects you rejects me" (Luke 10:16).

Since God commanded all to be members of His Church, those who *deliberately disobey* His command will not be saved. Whoever, through his own fault, remains outside of the Catholic Church, will be lost eternally.

3. One who, knowing the Catholic Church to be the true one, *leaves it or does not join it* because he wants to make a good marriage,

to advance his business, or for some other *worldly motive,* will not be saved. He is a willful and malicious unbeliever.

One who leaves the Church or does not enter it because of human respect, or because its doctrines require *personal sacrifices,* will not be saved. One who belongs to another church and has doubts about the truth or falsity of his own church, but *takes no pains* to find out the truth will not be saved. "If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin."

4. It is *not enough to belong* to the Church. We must also live up to our beliefs, otherwise our membership will only work to our greater condemnation. Only those Catholics who live according to the teachings of the Church will be saved.

The Church is a guarantee of salvation to those only who obey it. Unfortunately, there are bad Catholics. We must therefore *study* our religion and then *practice* it. God has given us the grace to be members of the true Church; we must not waste that grace.

5. Catholics who have committed *grave sins* such as murder, arson, adultery, etc., are still members of the Church. As long as a Catholic *does not deny* a doctrine of the Catholic faith, or is not excommunicated, he is a member of the Church.

Catholics in grave sin are called *dead members,* for their soul dead in mortal sin. Nevertheless they remain members, and have the privilege of receiving the sacraments to wash away their sins. Christ Himself predicted that in the Church there would be bad people with the good, cockle among the wheat. Mother Church is a good mother that patiently awaits the return of her sinful children, and does not exclude them from her gifts.

6. An *excommunicate* is one who has been cut off from membership in the Church for some serious sin against faith. He is excluded from the sacraments, from Catholic burial, and from being prayed for in the public prayers of the Church. In order to become once more a member of good standing in the Church, an excommunicate has to obtain the absolution of the bishop.

Catholics who join Masonry, or marry before a non-Catholic minister, are *automatically* excommunicated, if they knew the serious nature of their action.

Can they be saved who remain outside the Catholic Church because they do not know it is the true Church?—They who remain outside the Catholic Church through no grave fault of their own, and do not know it is the true Church, can be saved by making use of the graces which God gives them.

1. God condemns no man except for grave sin. Therefore He will not condemn those who *through no fault of their own* are unaware of His command to belong to the True Church, provided they serve Him faithfully according to their conscience, have a sincere desire to do His will in all things, and therefore *implicitly* wish to become members of His Church. They are members of the Church, in *desire.*

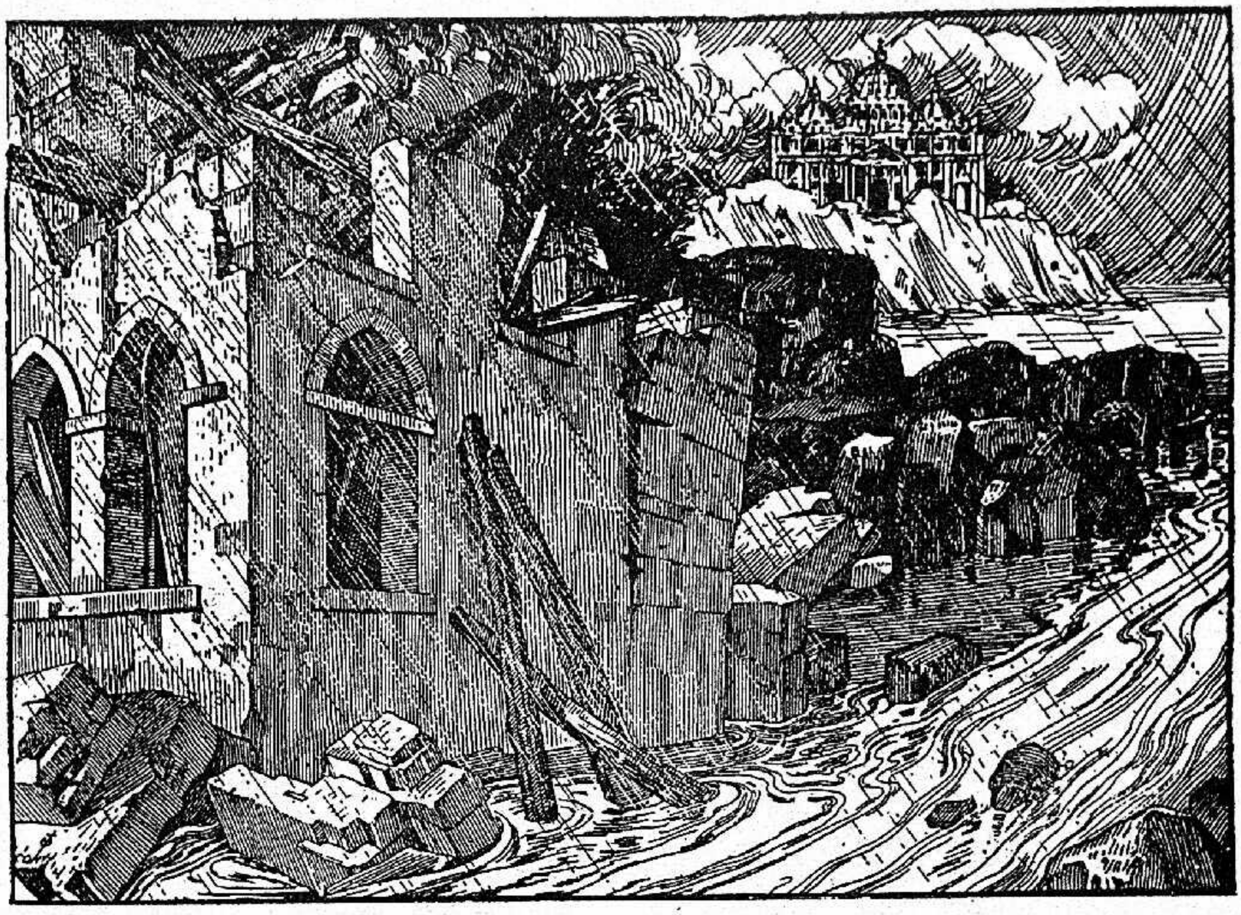
A *baptized Protestant,* of Protestant parents, lives all his life a Protestant without ever having a doubt that he is in the wrong. Before death he makes an act of perfect contrition for the sins he has committed. Such a man will be saved, for he dies in the state of grace.

2. It is possible for one that has never even heard of Jesus Christ to be saved, for God "wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4) and "Christ died for all" (2 Cor. 5:15). In order that such a one may be saved, it is required that he observe the *natural law;* with the help of God, everyone having the use of reason can do that.

Whoever then obeys the *natural law* will be enlightened by God, at some time in his life, with the grace with which he can make an act of Divine faith. If he makes good use of this grace and firmly believes whatever God has revealed, he will receive the further graces with which he can make the acts of hope, repentance, and charity that must precede before God will bestow on his soul sanctifying grace, with which he can merit eternal life.

3. The fact that it is possible for those outside the Church to be saved should not make us lose sight of the *great disadvantages* they are under, as compared with Catholics who live in the full light of Divine revelation. Such persons have not the infallible Church to guide them in what they are to believe and do in order to serve God. They have to live without the Sacraments, Holy Mass, and Holy Communion, and the other countless sources of grace which the Church supplies for the sanctification of its children, those professed Catholics who are members of the *body* of the visible Church.

These disadvantages should make us Catholics realize more fully the many reasons we have for humbly thanking God for the priceless blessings we have received without any claim or merit of our own. They should also spur us on to give Him a more worthy service, and help spread our Faith.



Our Lord said: "Everyone therefore who hears these my words and acts upon them, shall be likened to a wise man who built his house on rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, but it did not fall, because it was founded on rock. And everyone who hears these my words and does not act upon them, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house on sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and was utterly ruined" (Matt. 7:24-27).

Non-Catholic churches are the "house upon sand"; they rise up and fall. The Catholic Church is the "house upon rock"; it will last forever.

71. Schism and Heresy

What is schism; and what is heresy?—Schism is the act of refusing to submit to the authority of the Pope; heresy is the formal and deliberate denial or doubt of any revealed truth of the Catholic Faith.

Apostasy is the total rejection of his Faith by a baptized Catholic. With heresy and schism, and supported by persecution, it has caused divisions in the True Church, and the rise of other churches.

1. *Christ* predicted divisions in the Church, and the rise of other churches. From the time of the Apostles new denominations have sprung up, and have divided and subdivided, to form other denominations. With other churches that are non-Christian, the Christian denominations have opposed the Apostolic Church.

"For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24).

2. The *difference* between a heretical and a schismatical church is this: while both may believe in the same doctrines, the schismatical church has valid orders and sacraments, but the heretical church has not.

What were the most important schisms and heresies that have tried to destroy the Church?—Of the numerous schisms and heresies, the following may be mentioned:

1. Arius was a priest of Alexandria who taught that Jesus Christ was not God. The *heresy of Arius* spread rapidly, and was supported by the Roman emperors. He was

condemned by the First General Council of the Church, at Nicea, in the year 325; the Council declared the divinity of Christ.

In a few centuries the Arian sect was divided and swept away by other errors. Today we know Arius only by name; he has passed on, but the Church he fought still lives, upholding Christ's divinity.

Another heretic of the early days was **Macedonius,** who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost. His theories were condemned by the Council of Constantinople in the year 381.

In the fifth century **Pelagius** denied original sin, and declared grace not necessary for salvation. The doctrines were condemned by the synods of Milevi and Carthage, and the decision ratified by the Pope.

Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, in the fifth century taught the doctrine that Jesus Christ was two persons: a man and God the Son; only the man Jesus was born of Mary and died on the cross. As a consequence, the Nestorians rejected the title "Mother of God" for the Blessed Virgin. The Third Council in Ephesus, 431, condemned the heresies.

As a form of extreme reaction from Nestorianism, the **Monophysites** held that Jesus Christ had only one nature, his divinity totally engulfing his humanity. Dioscoros, Patriarch of Alexandria, was the chief propagator of the heresy, which was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

In an effort to call back the Monophysites to the Church, the heresy of **Monothelitism** arose. The chief doctrine was that Christ had a single will; the heresy was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 681.

In the year 727, the Greek emperor Leo forbade all veneration to images on the ground that such veneration was idolatry. The heresy spread, and mobs entered churches to break images, to burn and destroy priceless works of art. Great harm was done to the people and their faith, before this heresy, called **Iconoclasm** (image-breaking), died out. The Council of Nicea in 787 defined the true doctrine of the Church.

2. The *greatest* schism suffered by the Christian Church was that of the East, resulting in the establishment of the Orthodox Eastern Church: The Eastern emperors, desiring more power in the Church, tried to make the patriarchs of Constantinople independent of Rome. Finally, Photius, with the support of the emperor, held a council of Eastern bishops in the year 867, and broke from Rome.

The cause of the schism was not doctrinal, but rather political and material,—jealousy between the East and the West. It has resulted in the separation from Rome of 145 million people with valid priesthood and sacraments. In the United States there are a number of schismatical churches, among them the Greek Orthodox, and the Russian Church.

(a) After minor schisms and misunderstandings between East and West in 1054 there was a final break by Cerularius, patriarch of Constantinople, continuing today.

Today the Orthodox Eastern Church remains in schism, but does not spread. It is a withered branch, having cut itself off from the parent tree.

(b) The Orthodox Eastern Church denies the Catholic dogma that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. It also teaches that the souls of the just will not attain complete happiness till the end of the world, when they will be joined to their bodies; and that the souls of the wicked will not suffer complete torture in hell until that last day. These are heresies against the doctrines of the Church.

Thus it can be seen that today the Orthodox Eastern Church is not merely schismatical, but truly heretical; for it holds primary doctrines in a different light. But it has valid orders. (*See pages* 110-111.)

3. In the 12th century *Albigensianism* arose in southern France. It upheld duallism: two opposing creative principles, the good creating the spiritual world, and the evil creating the material world.

The Albigenses went to excesses, recommending suicide, forbidding marriage, asserting that Our Lord did not have a human body, denying the resurrection of the body. The heresy was condemned by the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.

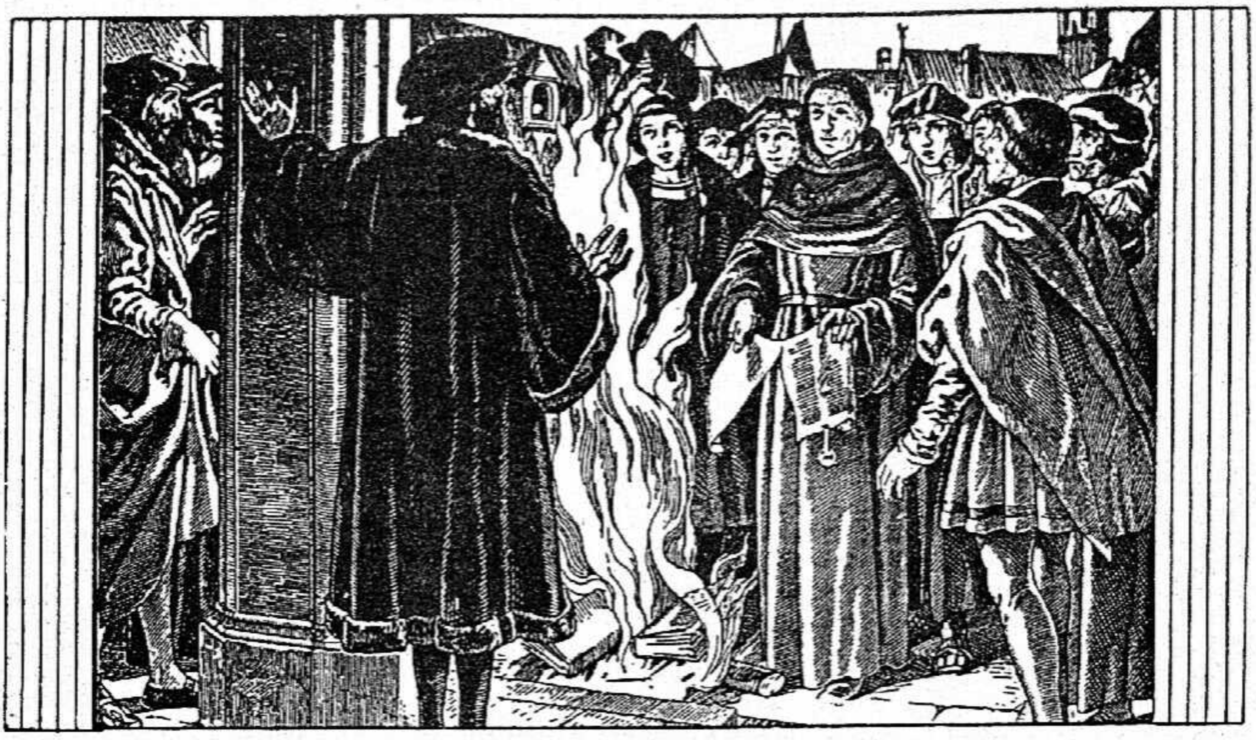
4. As an offshoot of Albigensianism, *Waldensianism* spread throughout Spain, Lombardy, Bohemia, and neighboring countries. The heresy continued until the outbreak of Protestantism, when it merged with this.

The Waldenses denied the existence of Purgatory, combatted indulgences, asserted that laymen could preach and absolve, oaths were unlawful, sinful priests had no valid power of ministry, etc.

But out of evil God has often drawn good. Each schism and heresy has led to profound study in the Church, study of scholars to discover the correct interpretation of doctrine under dispute. In this way light came from darkness. As wise St. Augustine said: "Those who err in doctrine only serve to show forth more clearly the soundness of those who believe aright."

5. In the fourteenth century, *Wycliff* in England taught that the Bible was the sole rule of faith, that there was no freedom of the will, that Confession was useless, that the Pope had no primacy.

Adopting the theories of Wycliff, *Huss* in Bohemia spread the errors. Political considerations complicated the heresy; fighting broke out, lasting years.



Upon Martin Luther's refusal to retract his declarations on the teachings of the Church, he was excommunicated. But Luther proudly tore up the papal bull of excommunication, and burned it. The fire that incident started has not yet burned down.

72. Protestant Churches

Who are Protestants?—In general, Protestants are adherents of the religious organizations that broke off from the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century, or of any religious body formed from them.

1. The term *"Protestant"* was first given to those who protested against the decree of the second Diet of Speyer in 1529. Later the term was applied to all reformers, all opposing the doctrines of the Church.

Even today the term is included in the new formula of the Declaration of Faith that the King of England must make at his coronation. He says: "I declare that I am a faithful Protestant."

2. In the sixteenth century the *Protestant revolt* took place, this beginning of a multitude of heresies, this sad event that has divided Christendom for centuries. Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk of Erfurt, taking offense at what he believed was a lack of appreciation for him at Rome, combated the teaching of the Church on indulgences, in the year 1517.

The Pope commanded Luther to retract his teachings; upon his refusal, he was excommunicated, in 1520. His heretical teachings spread like wildfire over Germany, occasioning religious wars; peace came only with the Peace of Augsburg, in 1555.

(a) The Council of Trent met (1545-1563) to set forth in a clear manner the errors of the Protestants, by explaining the *true doctrine* of the Church on those points. At that time, religious training had relaxed; many did not know the true doctrines.

Among the errors of Luther were these: that there is no supreme teaching power in the Church; that temporal rulers have the right to interfere in ecclesiastical matters; that the Bible is the sole guide to faith; that every man should interpret the Bible according to his own mind; that faith is sufficient for salvation; that the priesthood does not imprint a special character on the soul of a man, and that everybody is or can be a priest, as a result; that Penance is not a sacrament, but a mere invention of the Church; that the Mass gives no special grace; that there is no purgatory, etc.

(b) In the beginning, Protestantism spread rapidly. Whole countries, led by their rulers, adopted its doctrines. In Switzerland Zwingli and Calvin, and in England Henry VIII, about this time increased the defections from the Church. But soon there were other kinds of Protestantism.

Today the divisions and subdivisions of Protestantism are too well known to need comment. Great numbers of Protestants are returning to the faith of their fathers. Meanwhile, as the divisions subdivide, the Church continues to grow.

How may Protestant denominations be grouped? – Protestant denominations may be placed into three groups:

First, those requiring that a church be able to trace its *origin* to apostolic times. They believe in a priesthood established by Christ, and commanded to offer sacrifice and administer the sacraments. The High Church Episcopalians belong to this group.

Unfortunately the High Church Episcopalians deny a fact: their succession of bishops was cut when they separated from the Catholic Church, and so they have *no valid orders*. Hence they cannot have any sacraments except Baptism and Matrimony. The Anglican orders were declared invalid under Pope Leo XIII in 1896, after the question of their validity had been thoroughly examined.

Second, those that do not believe in the theory of "all religions are the same," but do not have an organized hierarchy. They insist on their own brand of Protestantism, requiring prospective members to study their doctrines. They consider *Holy Scripture* as the only rule of faith and of life. Some of them accept the Apostles' Creed, and teach justification by faith alone.

Lutherans, and some bodies of Methodist and Episcopal churches belong to this group.

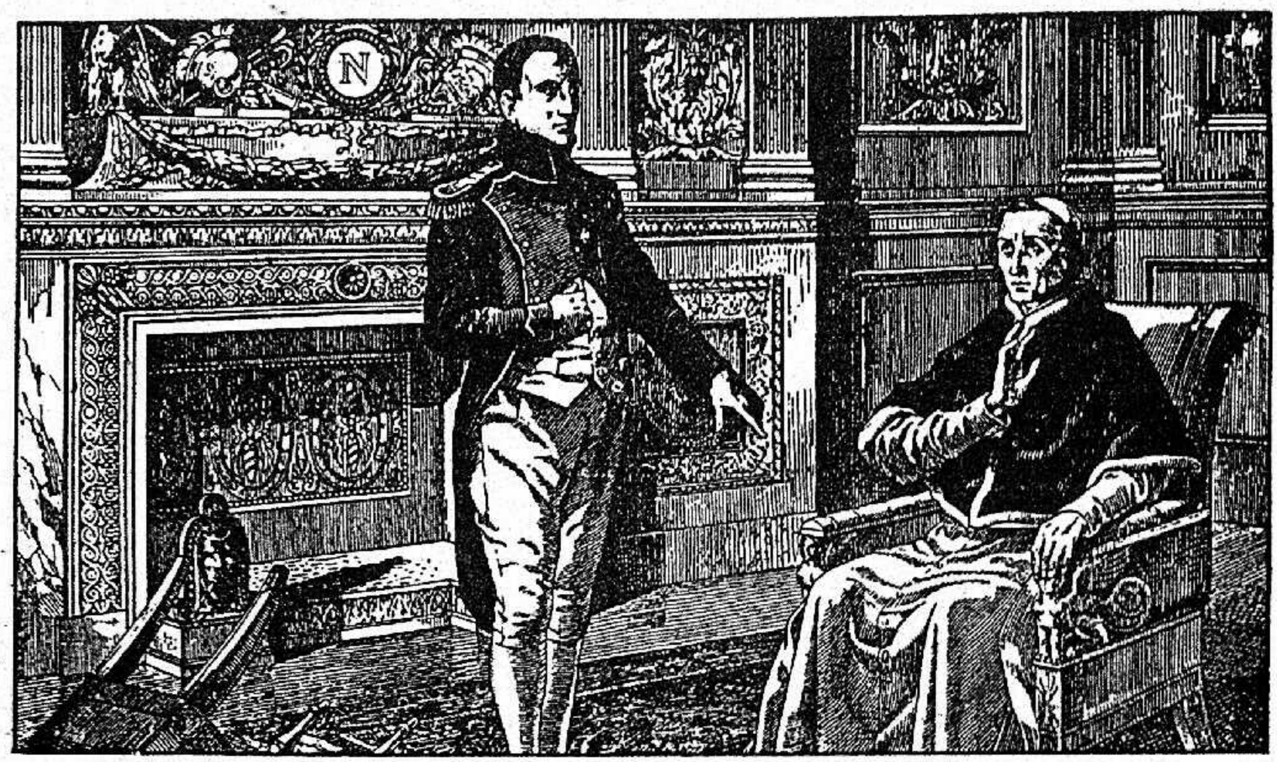
Third, those that declare Christ their personal Saviour, and believe in Baptism as indispensable; although some bodies do not hold the latter doctrine. Every Christian, according to them, must be a member of some church, on account of the *practical* benefits from church membership, from organized religion. But, one church is just as good as another.

To this group most of the bodies of Baptists, Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, and Congregationalists belong.

The Church for Everyman

It is often said that the Catholic Church is the Church of the ignorant. Perhaps; but below is a partial list of the many brilliant literary people who in recent times have been ***converted into the Catholic Church*** in adult life, with their eyes wide open. The Catholic Church is the Church of the ignorant; it is the Church of the wise. The Catholic Church is the Church for Everyman', whatever his race, color, economic condition, education,—for in the Church "there is not 'Gentile and Jew', 'circumcised and uncircumcised' . . ., 'slave and freeman'; but Christ is all things and in all" (Col. 3:11). Christ came to redeem all men; the Church is His Living Voice, His Mystical Body. Let us ***obey.***

Achmed Abdullah, Maurice Baring, Edwin Harrison Barker, Anita Bartle, Robert Hugh Benson, Eugene Bishop, Katherine Bregy, Heywood Broun, Orestes Brownson, Dom Bede Camm, Cecil Chesterton, G. K. Chesterton, Isabel Clarke, Paul Claudel, Ethel Cook, Dr. Herbert E. Cory, F. Marion Crawford, A. A. Curtis, Dorothy Day, Christopher Dawson, Selden P. Delany, Mary Angela Dickens, Enid Dinnis, Owen Francis Dudley, Richard Lynn Edsal, Ethel Cook Elliot, Francis Perry Elliot, R. Willoughby Ferrier, Henry Jones Ford, Mrs. Hugh Fraser, Henry Dymoke Gasson, Sir Philip Gibbs, Eric Gil, David Goldstein, Morris Gordon, William Hard, Henry Harland, Joel Chandler Harris, Msgr. Edward Hawks, Rose Hawthorne, Carlton J. H. Hayes, Ross Hoffman, Christopher Hollis, Bishop Duane G. Hunt, Charles P. Hunt, Henry Jenner, Johannes Jorgensen, Vernon Johnson, Frances Parkinson Keyes, Joyce Kilmer, Clare Boothe Luce, Thomas Merton, George Parsons Lathrop, Shane Leslie, D. B. Wynham Lewis, Helen Landreth, Theophilus Lewis, Arnold Lunn, Compton Mackenzie, Lucas Malet, Horace Mann, C. C. Martindale, Jacques Maritain, Bruce Marshall, Theodore Maynard, Charles W. Myers, Alice Meynell, John Moody, Anne Nichols, Meredith Nicholson, Alfred Noyes, Dr. William Orchard, Giovanni Papini, Coventry Patmore, C. Kegan Paul, John Howard Payne, Max Pemberton, Alexandra Rachmanova, Mrs. Victor Rickard, Ruth Reed, Daniel Sargent, Adeline Sergeant, Lady Eleanor Smith, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Frank H. Spearman, Cynthia Stockley, Charles W. Stoddard, John L. Stoddard, John Swinnerton, "Guy Thorne", Ivar Tidestrom, Sigrid Undset, Aubrey de Vere, Dr. Frederick Wagner, "Artemus Ward," Evelyn Waugh, Sir Bertram Windle, Norman Wise, Cuthbert Wright, Fulton Oursler, etc.



In the castle of Fontainebleu Napoleon forced the Pope to give up the States of the Church, promising an annual income of two million francs. In the same castle Napoleon was himself later forced to sign an abdication and was promised a yearly income of the same amount. When the Pope excommunicated Napoleon, he answered that the words of an old man would not make the arms drop from the hands of his soldiers. In the Russian campaign, because of the intense cold, this actually happened. He kept Pius VII prisoner for five years; he himself was later a prisoner for seven years. Four days after ordering the union of the States of the Church with France, he lost the battles of Aspern and Erlingen.

73. The Gates of Hell

What was the end of the leaders of persecution, schism, and heresy?—Many of the leaders of persecution, schism, and heresy came to a bad end.

1. Of the first persecutors, several died violent deaths. The death of Judas is the *type* for his imitators. It is related that:

Herod, the murderer of the Holy Innocents, died in unspeakable tortures.

Herod, the murderer of James the Apostle, was devoured by worms.

2. Of the persecutors in Rome, *Nero* was deposed, and in despair stabbed himself.

Domitian was assassinated.

Hadrian became insane.

Marcus Aurelius, despondent over the ingratitude of his only son, starved himself to death.

Septimus Severus, whose life had been attempted by his only son, died in despair.

Decius died miserably in a swamp, during a battle. *Valerian* was flayed alive by the Persians.

Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber.

Diocletian died from a loathsome disease.

Julian the Apostate was struck down by a lance on the field of battle, and died crying: "Galilean, Thou hast conquered!"

3. The case of ***Napoleon*** is instructive.

Drunk with power, Napoleon seized Rome in 1808, declaring himself the "successor of Charlemagne". He banished Cardinals and bishops, and carrying off Pope Pius VII, held him prisoner in Savona. Enemies of the Church exulted: "The Papacy is ended! The Emperor has devoured the Pope!" They forgot the divine promise to Peter: ***"The gates of hell shall not prevail!"***; on that promise was based the ancient saying: "Who eats of the Pope dies like a beast." On the same day that Napoleon died in exile at St. Helena, Pope Pius VII was celebrating his own feast day in Rome.

4. *Heretics* and *schismatics* have shared the same fate. Arius burst asunder during a triumphal procession. Voltaire died in despair. The Greek Schismatics fell under the Turkish yoke in 1453, on Pentecost, the feast of that Holy Ghost about whom they had expressed doubts.

Truly history has shown the truth of the words of Holy Scripture: ***"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"*** (Heb. 10:31).

Why can no other church except the Catholic Church be the True Church of Christ?—No other church except the Catholic Church can be the True Church of Christ, because no other church possesses the marks of unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity.

Truth cannot change; hence the constantly changing doctrines of non-Catholic churches cannot be true. They also differ in their *government*. Some recognize the temporal ruler as their spiritual head. Others have ministers whom they call bishops, deacons, elders. The majority reject such titles.

1. There are hundreds of churches and Christian denominations, each *different* from the others; they do not possess the mark of ***unity.*** They differ in even the essentials of faith. They cannot agree, and keep dividing and subdividing year by year. Their only similarity appears to be their opposition to the Catholic Church.

Such churches are multiplying. In the United States there are over two hundred religious bodies. They arise, then pass away, to give place to other denominations. Realizing the great handicap of disunity, efforts have been made by various groups of churches to organize. General councils and conferences of different bodies have been held; but there is no vital result for unity. This is of course because, though agreement may be general concerning matters such as social work, beneficent societies, and the like, no agreement can be found in the essentials of faith and doctrine. This is the result of free interpretation of the Bible, and the repudiation of Peter's successor, Vicar of Christ.

2. The denominations and their founders are not ***holy*** in the same sense or degree as the Catholic Church and its Founder are holy. Many non-Catholics are upright and good because they have retained many doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church.

Many founders of non-Catholic churches were far from holy. *Luther,* the founder of Protestantism, was an apostate friar, who married a nun who had left her convent and turned against her vows. During his life he taught contradictory doctrines, some of them immoral. *Henry VIII,* the founder of Anglicanism, married five women successively, after divorcing his lawful wife; he had two put to death.

3. No denomination is ***catholic,*** or universal. These non-Catholic churches are everywhere, but are different everywhere.

A regional or *national* Church cannot be the true Church, since it cannot teach all nations, as Christ commanded.

4. No heretical Christian denomination is ***apostolic.*** The Protestant churches are some 1500 years later than the Church founded on the Rock of Peter.

Not even their teachings come down from the Apostles. Their ministers cannot trace their succession from the Apostles. Not one teaches *all* the doctrines of the Apostles. How then could they be the Church founded by Christ?

What should be the attitude of Catholics towards those who do not belong to the True Church?—Catholics should observe an attitude of understanding towards them, because the majority of those who do not belong to the True Church are in good faith.

1. Catholic teachings are not easy to *understand* at first sight; many Catholic practices require *sacrifice.* Towards such a religion there is bound to be prejudice.

To be obliged to go to Mass every Sunday under pain of mortal sin; to have to confess to a priest, who is another human being like ourselves; to condemn divorce and birth control; to observe fasts and abstinence;—these are not easy doctrines.

No wonder in looking for relief, man often, however unconsciously, seeks motives for not accepting the Church that commands its members to obey such precepts, to accept such doctrines.

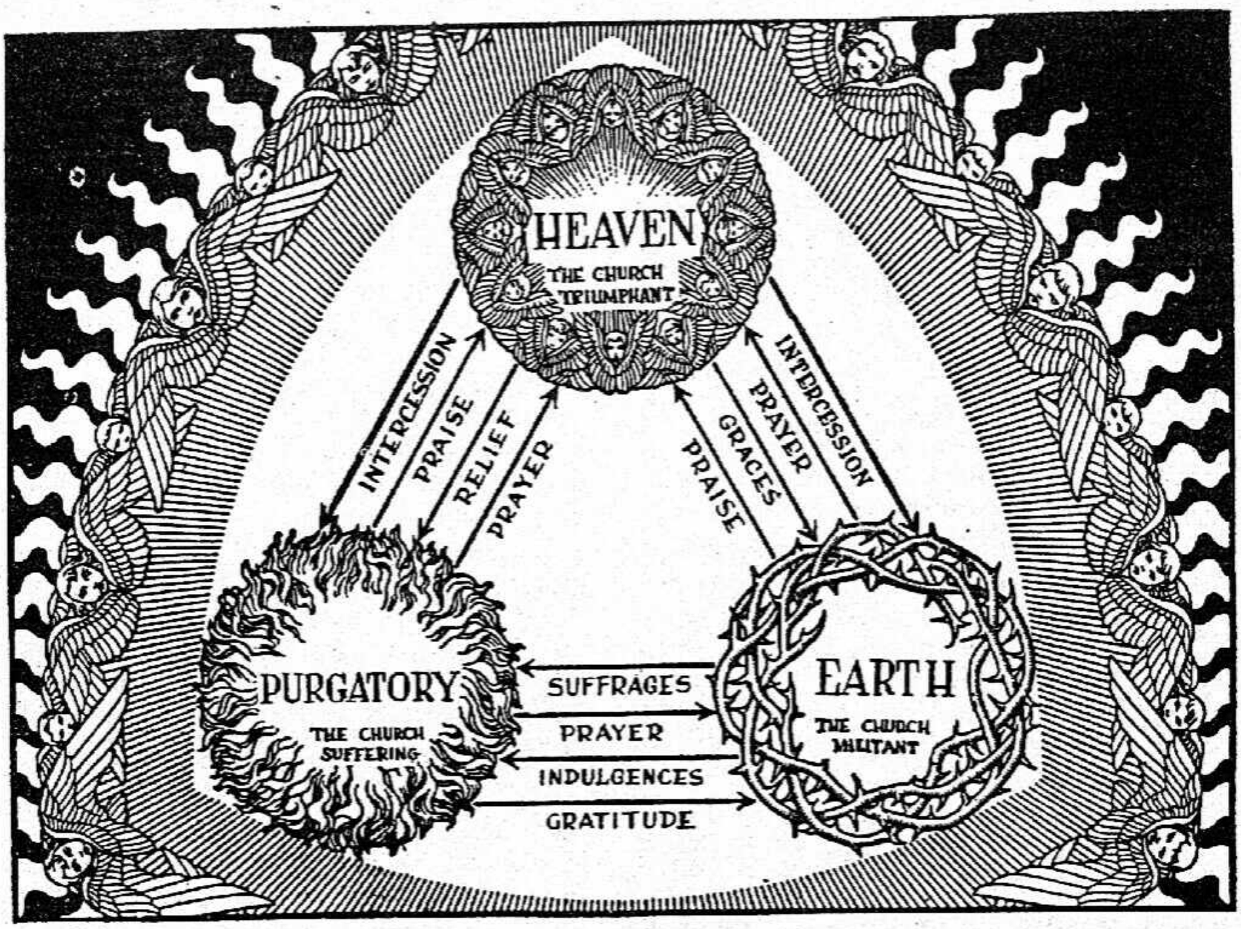
When Our Lord first announced the institution of the Holy Eucharist, many of the disciples said, "This is a hard saying. Who can listen to it?" (John 6:62). And they no longer went with Jesus.

2. Catholics should above all try to give *good example;* nothing is more effective in the eyes of non-Catholics than the exemplary lives led by good Catholics.

"Behave yourselves honorably among the pagans; that, whereas they slander you as evildoers, they may through observing you by reason of your good works glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12). Catholics should often pray for the conversion of those outside the Church, praying with the Good Shepherd for only one Fold.

3. While avoiding useless discussions that generally end in bitter quarrels, Catholics should try to show the beauty, the ***truth*** of the Catholic Church.

In our friendly discussions with non-Catholics we should not be always on the defensive, but should try to see whether they can trace the origin of the authority of their ministers to the Apostles, whether their church can be proved the True Church by the possession of the four marks. Often our non-Catholic friends criticise the Catholic Church on account of some devotional practices, like holy water, candles, etc., as if such practices belonged to the essentials of faith.



The illustration shows the continuous communication in the three portions of the Church spiritually united in Jesus Christ. The members on earth send up prayers to the angels and saints for themselves and for the poor souls in purgatory. They in turn are helped by the intercession of the saints and angels, and by the graces obtained thereby. The poor souls pray for the members on earth.

74. One Body in Christ: Communion of Saints

Why is the Catholic Church called the Mystical Body of Christ?—The Catholic Church is called the Mystical Body of Christ, because its members are united by supernatural bonds with one another and with Christ, their Head, thus resembling the members and head of the living human body.

1. The term "Mystical Body of Christ" is derived from St. Paul's metaphor: *"He is the head of his **body**, the Church"* (Col. 1:18). Again: "You are the body of Christ, member for member" (1 Cor. 12:27). "We, the many, are one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:5).

Jesus Himself used a similar symbol: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he shall be cast outside as the branch and wither" (John 15:5-6).

2. In the Mystical Body, Christ as Head wills *to be helped* by His Body. Thus He rules the Church, but does so indirectly, through the hierarchy, human authority.

In a similar manner the human head, to live, has need of the rest of the body. The hierarchy is the material on which is formed the Image of Christ, God. The acts, ceremonies, ritual, liturgy of the Church,—all these are outward signs of the inward reality of the union of the members with one-another and with their Head, Christ; they are visible manifestations of a common supernatural life in the Godhead.

3. Among the members of the Mystical Body of Christ there exists an *interdependence;* so that although each one has his own individual function, yet he does not live for himself alone, but for the entire Body. Every good he does perfects the Body, of which he is a part.

Similarly, the eye, or the foot, or the arm of a man is useless existing alone and apart from the rest of his body. Here is an example of the interdependence among members of the Church: Suppose a Catholic prays to recover from a grievous illness, and he does not recover; there is no evident answer to his prayers. Yet, do they go to waste? God lets no good work "go to waste"; the merits of the prayers are not lost for the Mystical Body.

4. Because of the interdependence among the members, and between members and Head, of the Mystical Body, there follows a continuous *contribution and distribution* of merits and graces, profiting all towards eternal life. This supernatural fellowship, this mystical union and interdependence, is presented to us in the Apostles' Creed in the doctrine of the ***Communion of Saints.***

What is meant by "the Communion of Saints" in the Apostles' Creed?—By "the Communion of Saints" is meant the union of the faithful on earth, the blessed in heaven, and the souls in purgatory, with Christ as their Head.

There is *only one* Mystical Body, only one Church. But this Church has three aspects: the Church Triumphant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Militant.

1. The saints and angels in heaven compose the ***Church triumphant,*** because they have gained the crown of victory. The souls in purgatory compose the ***Church suffering,*** because they still have to expiate for their sins before they can enter heaven. The faithful on earth compose the ***Church militant,*** because they have to struggle ceaselessly against the enemies of their souls.

The Church triumphant, the Church suffering, and the Church militant compose *one Church united in Christ,* members of a body whose head is Christ: "So we, the many, are one body in Christ, but severally members one of another' (Rom. 12:5).

2. All the members of the Church are of *one family,* and share in the spiritual treasures of the Church. However, not all members of the Church Militant fully enjoy the benefits of the communion of saints, but only those in a state of grace.

"Dead members" do not lose all the benefits of the communion of saints, for the Church prays publicly for them, and particular members in the state of grace often send up petitions for them. Thus they may receive the grace to repent and recover sanctifying grace. Hence a Catholic who still belongs to the Church, although a great sinner, may have more hope of being converted than one who cuts himself off from the Church.

How do the members of the Communion of Saints help one another?—The members of the Communion of Saints help one another by prayer and intercession, and by the merits of their good works.

1. The faithful on earth can *help one another* by practicing supernatural charity and, especially, by performing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

St. Peter was freed from prison by the prayers of the faithful. St. Stephen's prayer obtained the conversion of St. Paul. The prayers of St. Monica led to the conversion of her son, St. Augustine. This is why today, on all occasions, Catholics ask for each other's prayers, and pray for those in need. They give the *spiritual alms* of prayers continually, even when they cannot perform the corporal works.

2. The faithful on earth, through the communion of saints, can *relieve* the sufferings of the souls in purgatory by prayer, fasting, and other good works, by indulgences, and by Masses offered for them.

St. Augustine says: "Prayer is the key by which we open the gates of heaven to the suffering souls." In the Memento after the consecration at every Mass, a special petition is made for the souls of the faithful departed. The poor souls *cannot merit* anything; they depend upon their brothers in Christ on earth and in heaven to help them attain their eternal home as soon as possible.

3. The souls in purgatory *pray* to the angels and saints, and pray *for the living.*

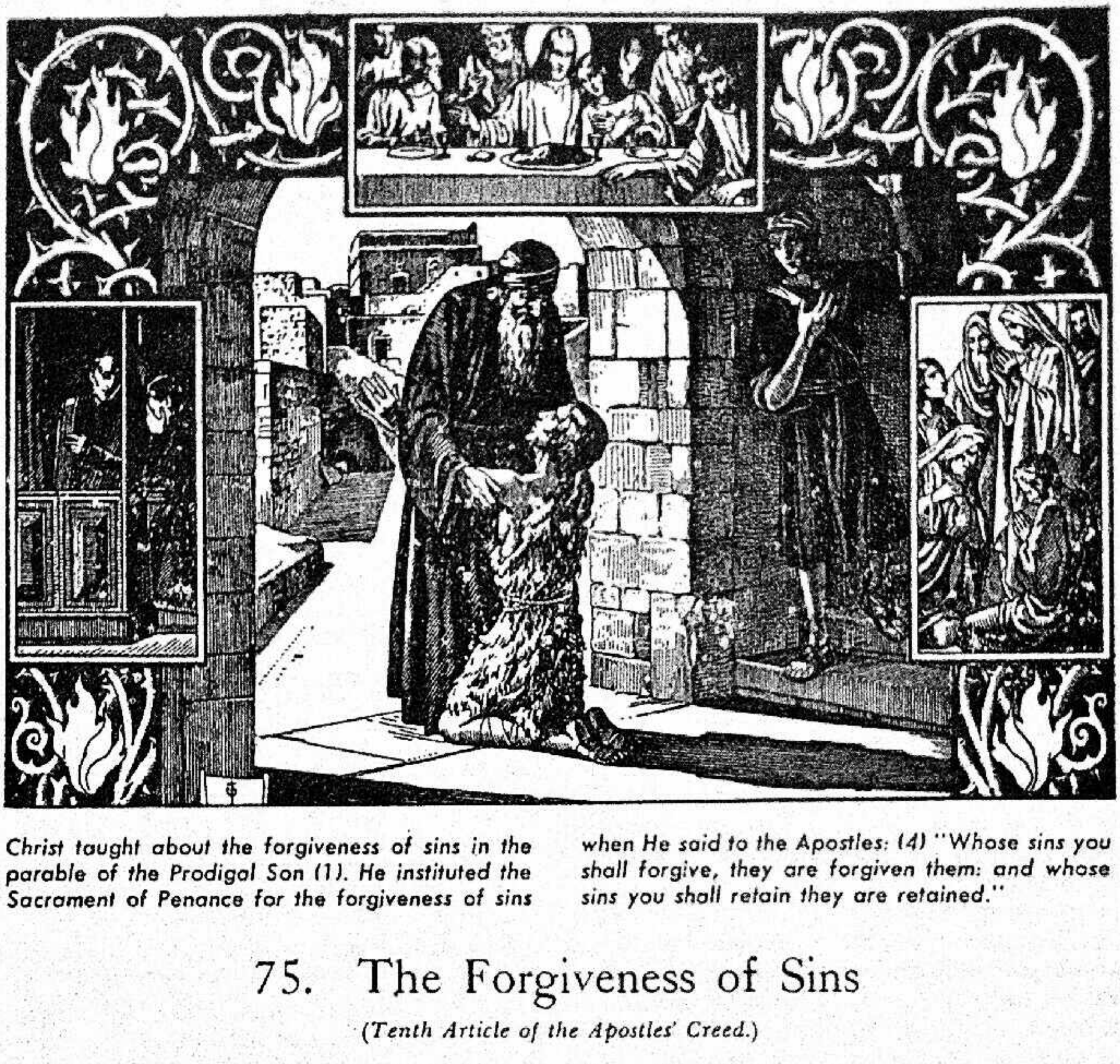
They cannot merit anything, either for themselves or for the living, but they *intercede* for us.

4. Through the communion of saints, the *blessed in heaven* can help those in purgatory and on earth by praying for them. The faithful on earth should *honor* the blessed in heaven and pray to them, because they are worthy of honor and as friends of God will help the faithful on earth.

This is why we pray to the saints and angels that they may intercede for us before God, Whom they see face to face. "Rendering thanks to God the Father, who has made us worthy to share the lot of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12).

5. The doctrine of the communion of saints is one of the most *consoling* dogmas of the Church. When our loved ones die, they are not separated from us forever. Whether in heaven or purgatory, they still love us and pray for us.

We should be happy to call saints and angels our brothers. We should implore their intercession, not only for ourselves, but also for our other brothers, the poor souls in purgatory.



Christ taught about the forgiveness of sins in the parable of the Prodigal Son (1). He instituted the Sacrament of Penance for the forgiveness of sins when He said to the Apostles: (4) "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained."

75. The Forgiveness of Sins

(Tenth Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

What is meant in the Apostles' Creed by "the forgiveness of sins"? — By "the forgiveness of sins" in the Apostles' Creed is meant that God has given to the Church, through Jesus Christ, the power to forgive sins, no matter how great or how many they are, if sinners truly repent.

1. In the Old Law, sins were forgiven through the merits of the Redeemer *that was to come*. In the New Law they are forgiven through the merits of the Redeemer *Who has come*.

Pointing to Christ, St. John the Baptist said: "Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

2. We can obtain forgiveness of sin, because *Christ the Redeemer* merited forgiveness for us by His death. The Church has power to remit sins through the merits of Jesus Christ, "in whom we have our redemption, the remission of our sins" (Col. 1:14).

During life, Christ actually forgave sin. For example, He forgave Mary Magdalen, the paralytic, and the good thief. In curing the paralytic, He said, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then he said to the paralytic—"Arise, take up thy pallet and go to thy house" (Matt. 9:6).

3. Christ *gave to His Apostles and disciples* and their successors power to forgive sins. He said: "Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:22-23).

This power to forgive sins was not given to the Apostles alone, since men of later ages would need forgiveness as much as men of Apostolic times. The power, therefore, must also remain in the successors of the Apostles.

4. It is true, as the enemies of the Church assert, that man cannot forgive sins. Man, by his own individual power, can never forgive the smallest sin. But he can forgive all sins, with the power and authority God gave him, as minister of God, *acting in God's place*. Or is God limited because man is sinful? "These things I write to you in order that you may not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just" (1 John 2:1).

From the very beginning the Church has exercised this power, through the sacraments of *Penance* and *Baptism*, and even through Extreme Unction.

How may sins be remitted or forgiven?—Sins may be remitted or forgiven by various means, according to the kind and gravity of the sin: by Baptism, by Penance, and by good works.

1. *Original sin* is remitted through Baptism. When we are baptized, we become children of God, and heirs of heaven.

None but children of God, the baptized, can have a pass to God's eternal home.

2. *Actual sin* is remitted by Baptism, by Penance, by Extreme Unction, and by good works. Such good works are: prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds.

Good works cannot remit grave or mortal sin; they can only dispose a person to the state of mind which leads him to the Sacrament of Penance.

3. The guilt of forgiven sins *never returns*. Once forgiven, a sin is forgiven forever. If after our sins have been forgiven we commit a new sin, or sins like the ones already forgiven, we are guilty of new sins.

A man tells five lies. He repents and confessing his sin, obtains forgiveness. After a month he tells five lies again. He is guilty of having told only five lies, not ten.

What is vice?—Vice is a habit of sin formed by repeated acts of sin.

1. One who makes a *practice* of stealing has the vice of theft. One who *habitually* drinks to intoxication has the vice of drunkenness. One who *frequently* sins against chastity has the vice of impurity.

If one commits robbery and ever after avoids that sin, he has committed the mortal sin of robbery, but he has no vice. Similarly one may be completely intoxicated once, but if he resolves never again to drink, and sticks to his resolution, he has no vice.

2. A vice is *easily acquired*. This is one reason why we must be very careful not to commit sin. If we should be so unhappy as to fall into sin, we must at once cut off the possibility of forming vice by contrition, penance, and a resolution not to sin again.

After the first fall, one more readily yields to the next temptation. Each yielding *weakens the will* for the next. Thus step by step one who starts a sin will soon find himself the slave of a vicious habit. *"He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little"* (Ecclus 19:1).

3. A vice is easy to break off in the *beginning*, difficult to break when fully formed, but always capable of being overcome by a resolute will with God's grace.

It is easy enough to uproot a very young tree. But when it has grown into a mighty tree, it becomes extremely difficult. The vice having been firmly formed, it becomes a *necessity* and is impossible to break without extraordinary grace. This impossibility often leads many vicious persons to despair and to final *impenitence*. But God can do all things. One therefore who has contracted a habit of sin must have recourse to God, who will strengthen him, so that he can conquer his vice, by patient acts of virtue and a constant exertion of the will.

Can all sins be forgiven?—Yes, all sins, however great, can be forgiven, through the infinite merits of Christ, Who is God.

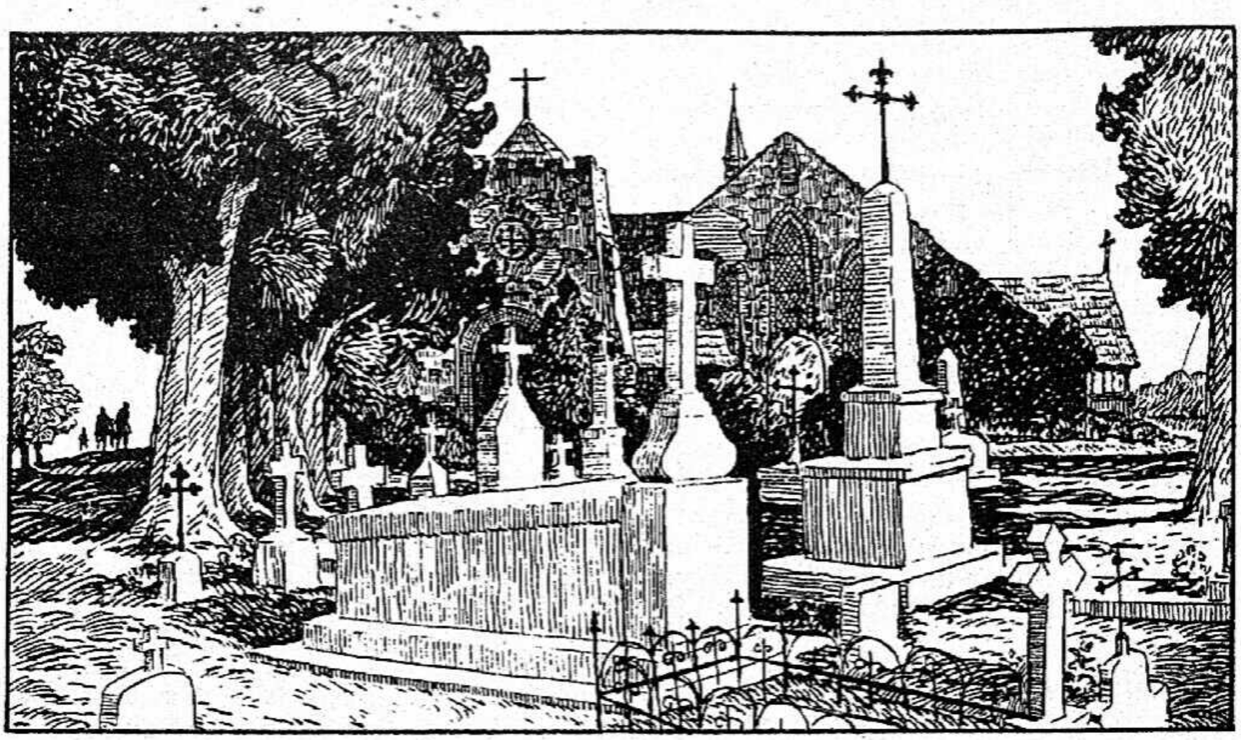
The repentant sinner is told in Scripture: "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow" (Is. 1:17).

1. God is always ready to forgive our sins, no matter how great or how many they are, if we are truly sorry for them. No actual sin can be forgiven without *sorrow* and *repentance* on the part of the sinner.

Our Lord said: "I say to you that, even so, there will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine just who have no need of repentance" (Luke 15:7).

2. The sin against the Holy Ghost which Christ warned us would not be forgiven in heaven or on earth is *persistent impenitence*, the sin of one who rejects conversion and dies in mortal sin. One guilty of this sin can never obtain forgiveness of God, because at the hour of death he continues to thrust God away from him.

A man mortally wounded cannot have any hope of cure if he not only refuses to listen to his doctors, but shuts his mouth against all medicines, and kicks away all medical instruments and help. Even Judas would have been pardoned if he had asked for forgiveness and made a sincere act of contrition before his death.



Respect for the dead requires that cemeteries be properly kept. We should remember that the bodies of the buried will one day rise again to join immortal souls and live forever with God.

Respect for the dead would also advise us to give up the recent fad of dolling up corpses, painting their faces to make them seem alive, as if they were prepared for some flighty show.

76. Death

(Eleventh Article of the Apostles' Creed.)

What happens at death?—At death the soul is separated from the body.

1. The soul is judged by God, and rewarded with heaven, punished with hell, or sent for a time to be cleansed in purgatory. The body begins to corrupt and returns to the dust from which it came.

St. Peter spoke of the body as a tabernacle for the soul: "the putting off of my tabernacle is at hand" (2 Pet. 1:14). At death, "the dust returns to its earth, from whence it came, and the spirit returns to God, Who gave it" (Eccles. 12:7). The only exceptions have been the bodies of Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, which rose to join their souls, and are now in heaven.

2. All men *must die,* because death is a consequence of original sin. "Therefore as through one man sin entered into this world and through sin death, and thus death has passed into all men" (Rom. 5:12).

By their sin our first parents lost the immortality of the body, for God condemned them to die. "Dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3:19). Even Jesus Christ and His Mother submitted to death.

3. *No one knows* when, where, or how he will die. All we know is that we shall die, and that when our hour strikes, nobody can take our place.

God has mercifully hidden from us the hour of our death. If we knew when we should die, we might be overcome by fear when the moment approached. Some, besides, might lead sinful lives in the hope of repenting just before their death.

4. We must therefore always be *ready* to die. Death comes "as a thief in the night", when we least expect it. We must live as if every moment were the last of life, always ready to appear before our Divine Judge.

"Therefore you must also be ready, because at an hour that you do not expect, the Son of Man will come" (Matt. 24:44).

How should we prepare for death?—We should prepare for death by leading a good life, avoiding sin, and doing good.

1. We must keep in God's grace and love, so that when the Angel of Death comes, we may *welcome him* as one who takes us home

to see the face of our loving Father. The good do not fear death.

Let us die with joy, saying to God, as Holy Simeon did: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace" (Luke 2:29). Let us imitate St. Paul, who says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will give to me in that day" (2 Tim., 4:7-8).

St. Augustine exclaims: "O how sweet it is to die, if one's life has been a good one!" For such as he, "to die is gain". To the just man death is only a passing into a *better life.* It is a journey to his everlasting home, where his heavenly Father dwells. Death is to be feared only by the sinner, for it is the end of his earthly pleasures, and the beginning of his eternal punishment.

2. As a man lives, so he dies. Holy Scripture says: *"As the tree falls, so shall it lie"* (Eccl. 11:3). We should often recall the thought of death and eternity so that we may avoid sin. "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin" (Ecclus. 7:40). Those who put off reforming their lives in the hope of a death-bed repentance are like a traveler who starts packing when the train whistles for departure.

Let us picture the death of a just man, one who all his life has done good and avoided evil. He has often seen people taken away suddenly, when they least expected it, and made up his mind to be always ready to die and face his Judge. He has hoped he would, at the end of his life, die with the Last Sacraments, a priest, and his family by his side. But his obligations have taken him into the wilderness; there he is dying, with only the guide at his side. But he is at peace, and a smile is on his lips, for he is ready to die: being always in the state of grace, he is ready to meet his Judge anywhere, any time. He knows the Judge will smile, too, and welcome him as a good son, a friend.

3. We should also have our *temporal affairs* in order when we die. This is why adults should make a *will* in order that no confusion may arise as to the disposition of their property after their death. A sudden death is not to be desired, for then we may not be able to put in order our spiritual and temporal affairs.

This is why in the Litanies we pray: "From a sudden and unprovided death, deliver us, O Lord!"

What are cemeteries?—Cemeteries are the burial grounds for the dead.

1. The word "cemetery" comes from the Greek, and means *sleeping-place;* there the bodies of the dead sleep till Judgment Day.

It is the custom to engrave the letters R. I. P. (*Requiescat in pace.* May he rest in peace) on headstones.

2. Cemeteries are solemnly consecrated. Catholics should be buried in a Catholic cemetery, if there is one; at least the grave should be blessed.

Some day the bodies of the just will rise in glory, and unite with their souls in heaven; is it befitting their high destiny to bury them like animals in unconsecrated ground? The bodies are buried facing the east, as a symbol of the hope the deceased placed in Christ, Light of the soul.

3. Cemeteries should be properly kept. They should be such as to invite everyone to go there and pray for those who have fallen asleep in Christ. The Church strictly forbids the desecration of graves and corpses.

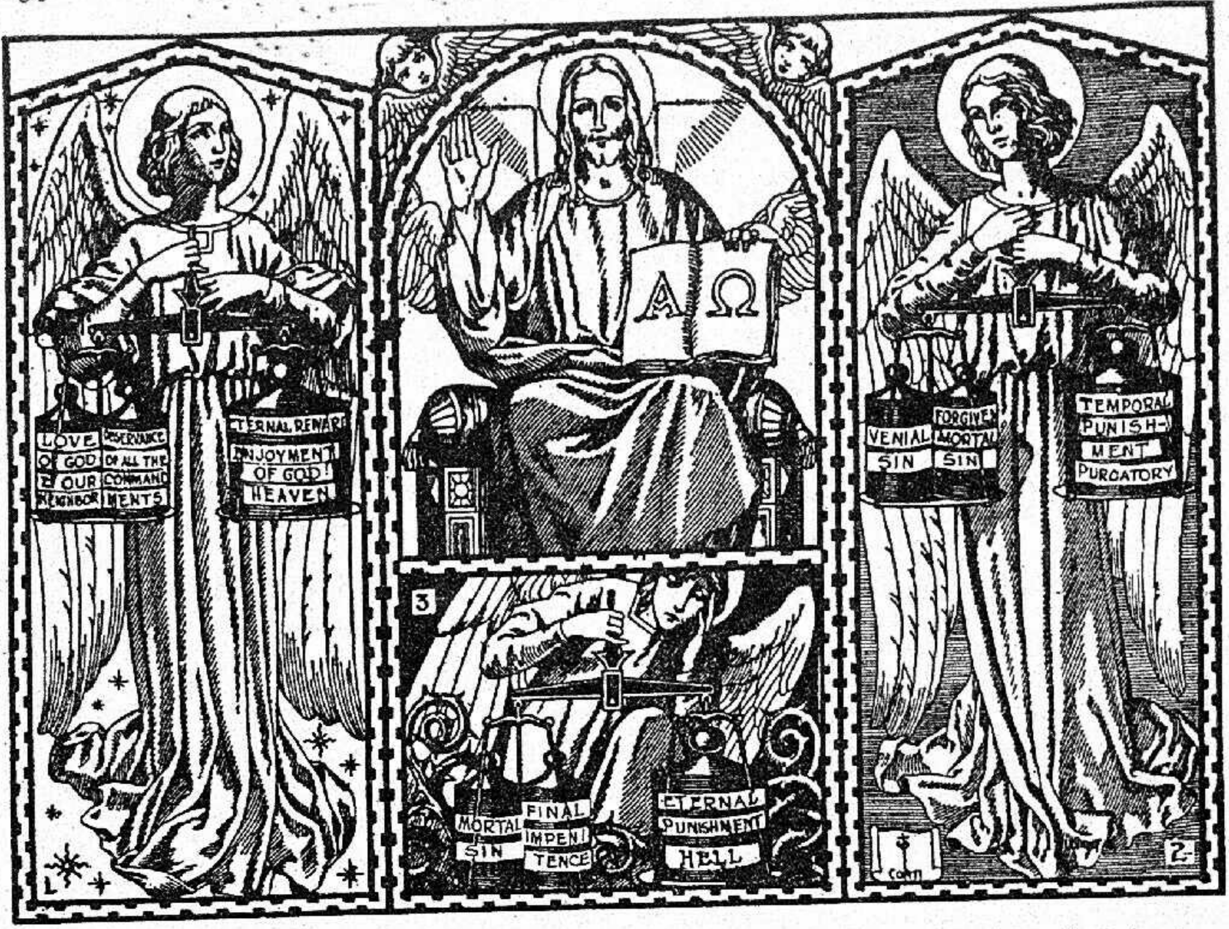
We should go regularly to the cemetery to see to it that the graves of our beloved dead are clean and well kept, and to pray for them. If when they were alive we liked to visit them, why shouldn't we continue to visit them even now that they are dead? Such visits would attest to our living faith in the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. It is true the souls of the dead are not in their graves, but the bodies there will some day be inhabited again by the souls. Our prayers in the presence of the bodies are the proof of our love for our dear dead.

4. Apostates, heretics, schismatics, the excommunicated, suicides, duellists, Masons, and public sinners, are not permitted to be buried in a consecrated Catholic cemetery.

The refusal of the Church to give Christian burial to her bad children does not mean that she sentences them to damnation: judgment of the dead is in the hands of God. It is merely a *public expression* of her condemnation of sin, and a disciplinary measure so that her other children may avoid falling into such sins. Non-Catholics are not permitted burial in a Catholic cemetery, because since they did not belong to the Church during life, there is no reason for including them in the burial grounds for members of the Church, at death. The Catholic cemetery is the family plot of the Church, and only members of the family are buried therein. For the same reason, the Church permits non-Catholic relatives, as a special concession, and if no scandal would thereby follow, to be buried in family mausoleums, vaults, or plots, in consecrated ground.

5. The Church forbids *cremation* of the bodies of the departed, except in cases of epidemics. It is a pagan custom that has become favored by modern materialists and atheists, as a sign of denial of immortality.

If Catholics ask for cremation, they may not be buried in consecrated ground.


LOVE OF GOD & OUR NEIGHBOR
OBSERVANCE OF ALL THE COMMANDMENTS
ETERNAL REWARD
ENJOYMENT OF GOD
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FINAL IMPENITENCE
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT
HELL
VENIAL SIN
FORGIVEN MORTAL SIN
TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT
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2
CONTI

Complete justice will not be done in this life, but in the next. Then everything will be weighed in the balance of God's justice, and punished or rewarded.

If on earth we have obeyed the commandments of God and of the Church we shall be given an eternal reward in Heaven (1). If we have obeyed all the commandments, but die with unforgiven venial sin, or without having satisfied for forgiven mortal sin, we shall be sent to Purgatory (2). Alas for us if we die with even one mortal sin! For then we shall be banished from the sight of God and suffer torments in hell forever (3).

77. Particular Judgment

What is the judgment called which will be passed on each one of us immediately after death?—The judgment which will be passed on each one of us immediately after death is called the particular judgment.

The existence of the particular judgment can be deduced from the parable of Dives and Lazarus; a soul is shown rewarded immediately after death.

1. As soon as each soul leaves the body at death it undergoes the Particular Judgment, at which its eternal destiny is decided. "We must all be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ." "It is appointed unto men to die once, but after this comes the Judgment" (Heb. 9:27). "Every one of us will render an account for himself to God" (Rom. 14:12).

Let us remember that even while the relatives gather around the bed of the departed one, even while his body is still warm, the particular judgment is gone through and finished; the judgment is passed, and the soul gone to his reward or punishment. If we remember this, we shall be more fervent in praying for the dead, in helping others die a happy death, so that they may meet God at the judgment without fear.

2. Jesus Christ is the ***Judge*** at the Particular Judgment. Before Him each soul must stand. The soul will stand in the awful presence of God the Son, to ***give an account*** of its whole life: of every thought, word, act, and omission.

"Neither does the Father judge any man, but all judgment he has given to the Son" (John 5:22).

3. A man's *whole life* will be spread before him like a great picture. He will re-

member everything, although he might have forgotten much at the moment of death. How he will wish then that he had done only good! We are not to suppose that the soul will go to heaven before Christ to be judged. God enlightens each soul in such a manner that it fully knows Christ has passed a true judgment on it.

"Of every idle word men speak, they shall give account on the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). The judgment will embrace even the good which has been neglected: a strict account will have to be rendered of the use we made of the talents and graces given to us. Even good actions badly performed will come under scrutiny careless communions, hasty confessions, etc. Only then shall we know the exactness with which God sees and measures every act, word, and even intention in our deepest thought.

4. The good and the evil that the soul has done will be weighed in the balance of God's justice. Then the sentence will be passed by Jesus Christ alone, without the intervention of witnesses. This sentence is final and will never be reversed. The soul will learn the sentence, the reasons for it, and its absolute justice.

"But of every one to whom much has been given, much will be required; and of him to whom they have entrusted much, they will demand the more" (Luke 12:48).

What are the rewards or punishments appointed for men after the particular judgment?—The rewards or punishments appointed for men after the particular judgment are heaven, purgatory, or hell.

"With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you" (Matt. 7:2). As we have loved God and our fellow-men during life, so we shall be given the proper reward or punishment.

1. He who dies in his *baptismal innocence*, or after having fully satisfied for all the sins he committed, will be sent at once to ***heaven.***

The just will enter into everlasting life (Matt. 25:46). Only those souls enter heaven who are free from all sin, and from the penalty due to sins which have been forgiven. Nothing defiled can enter heaven (Apoc. 21:27).

2. He who dies in the state of grace, but is in venial sin, or has not fully atoned for the temporal punishment due his forgiven sins, will be sent for a time to ***purgatory.***

The souls in purgatory are saints, because they are sure of going to heaven. In purgatory they cannot commit any more sin, not even the slightest. They only long for God.

3. He who dies in *mortal sin*, even if only with one single mortal sin, will be sent at once to ***hell.***

"For the hope of the wicked is as dust, which is blown away with the wind, and as a thin froth which is dispersed by the storm: and a smoke that is scattered abroad by the wind: and as the remembrance of a guest of one day that passeth by" (Wis. 5:15). By mortal sin a man cuts himself off from God. It is really *he himself that sends himself to hell.* God's desire would be to see all His creatures with Him in heaven.

How should we prepare for the judgment?—We should prepare for the judgment by being most careful to lead a good life and die a happy death.

1. We should do *all the good* we can, so that God may forgive the evil we may do. We should not only obey carefully all the Commandments of God and the Church, but do good works in prayer and alms-deeds, practicing charity for the love of God.

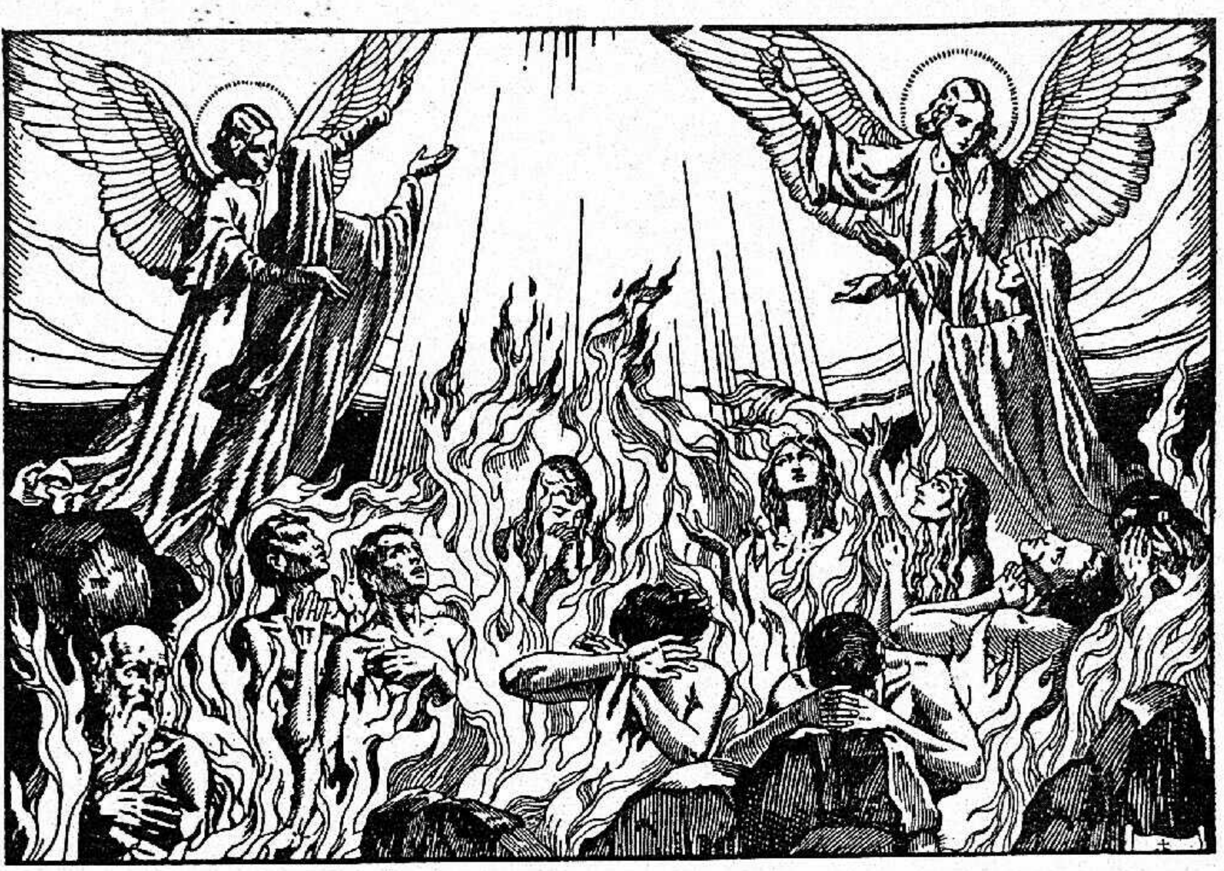
How can we be careless about a matter of such importance, when we are absolutely certain of being judged by God! "For what shall I do, when God shall rise to judge?" (Job 31:14).

2. We should do voluntary works of penance, for love of God, in expiation of any sins we may have the misfortune to commit.

The "Imitation of Christ" says on this topic: "In all things look to the end, and how thou wilt stand before the strict Judge, from Whom there is nothing hid; Who takes no bribes, and receives no excuses, but will judge that which is just.... Be, therefore, now solicitous for thy sins, that in the day of judgment thou mayest be in security with the blessed.... Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, and the proud fear on every side. Then it will appear that he was wise in this world, who for Christ's sake learned to be a fool and despised.... Then shall the flesh that was afflicted exult more than if it had always fared in delights.... Then a pure and good conscience shall bring more joy than learned philosophy. Then shall the contempt of riches far outweigh all treasures of the children of earth.... Learn to suffer now in little things, that thou mayest be delivered from more grievous sufferings.... All is vanity except to love and serve God alone" (*Bk. 1, chap. 24*).

3. We should never go to sleep without being *prepared* never to awake on earth again, but in the presence of our Judge.

Let us examine our conscience every day, make acts of contrition for our sins, confess them, and resolve to avoid them in the future.



Both reason and faith tell us that there is a middle ground of expiation, where the soul is cleansed from all stain of sin before it can enter the glory of heaven. "There shall not enter into it anything defiled" (Apoc. 21:27). Christ said, "Amen, I say to thee, thou will not come out from it until thou hast paid the last penny" (Matt. 5:26). Even persons who deny the existence of purgatory instinctively pray for their loved ones who have died. This would be great inconsistency if their reason did not tell them that their prayers would do the dead good. Prayers are useless for those in heaven or hell.

78. Existence of Purgatory

What is purgatory?—Purgatory is a place of temporary punishment for those who have died in the state of grace, but have not fully satisfied God's justice for all punishment due their sins.

1. Purgatory is *a middle state* where souls destined for heaven are detained and purified. Souls in purgatory *cannot help themselves*, for their time for meriting is past. But they can be helped by the faithful on earth, by prayers and other good works.

In some places, at eight o'clock at night, the church bells sound, to admonish the faithful to pray for the souls in purgatory. This hour is in commemoration of Christ's prayer in the garden. We should then kneel and pray one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and the *Requiem aeternam:* "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them," etc.

2. Belief in the utility of *praying for the dead* automatically includes belief in the existence of purgatory. If there were no purgatory, it would be useless to pray for the dead, because saints in heaven need no help, and those in hell are beyond aid.

And we can be sure there will be no more purgatory after the General Judgment; because the reason for its existence will have passed.

3. Purgatory is a place of *temporary punishment* for those who have died in venial sin, or who have not fully satisfied God's justice for mortal sins already forgiven.

(a) A boy steals an apple from a stall in the market; this is a venial sin punishable in purgatory. Some argue that God is a good God, and will not punish such slight sins with the pains of purgatory. We must remember, nevertheless, that the judgments of God are different from those of men, as His holiness is far above human holiness.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts." Let us reverence God's holiness and justice, as we have loving confidence in His mercy.

(b) A man commits a cruel murder. This is a mortal sin which, unrepented and unconfessed, will send him to hell.

The man repents, confesses, and obtains absolution for his sin; the guilt therefore is removed. But justice requires that he make up for the evil he has done; this atonement takes place in purgatory, unless he makes full satisfaction before death.

4. The doctrine of purgatory is eminently consoling to the human heart. It consoles us when our loved ones die. Purgatory is a bond of union making us realize that death is *not an eternal separation* for the just, but only a loss of their bodily presence.

Purgatory gives us an assurance that we are *still in touch* with our beloved dead. We are consoled by the knowledge that we can still help them with prayer, as in life we so helped them.

Is the doctrine of the existence of purgatory reasonable?—The doctrine of the existence of purgatory is not only reasonable, but its negation is eminently contrary to reason; it is taught in Holy Scripture, and has been taught by the Church from the very beginning.

1. The doctrine of a middle state of purgation is taught *in the Old Testament*, and was firmly believed in by the Hebrews.

After a battle, Judas Machabeus ordered prayers and sacrifices offered up for his slain comrades. "And making a gathering, he sent twelve drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For, if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins" (2 Mach. 12:43-46).

2. When *Our Lord* came on earth, He purified the Jewish Church of all those human changes that with the years had crept into its usages and beliefs. But He never reproved anyone for belief in a middle state of purgation, or prayers for the dead.

On the contrary, Christ more than once implied the existence of purgatory. He said "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this world, or in the world to come" (Matt. 12:32). When Our Lord said that a sin will not be forgiven in the next life, He left us to conclude that some sins will be thus forgiven. But in the next life, sins cannot be forgiven in heaven: "There shall not enter into it anything defiled" (Apoc. 21:27). Neither can sins be forgiven in hell, for out of hell there is no redemption. They must therefore be forgiven in a middle state, Purgatory.

3. Belief in the existence of Purgatory is a continuous and solemn teaching of *the Church*. From St. Paul, the early Fathers, the Doctors of the Church, on through the ages, the Church has taught the existence of Purgatory, and the correlated doctrine of the usefulness of praying for the dead.

From the beginning Christians prayed for the dead at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The oldest books used at Mass contain prayers for the dead.

The doctrine of Purgatory was given solemn definition by the Council of Trent as follows: "There is a purgatory, and the souls there detained are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful, but especially by the most acceptable sacrifice of the altar."

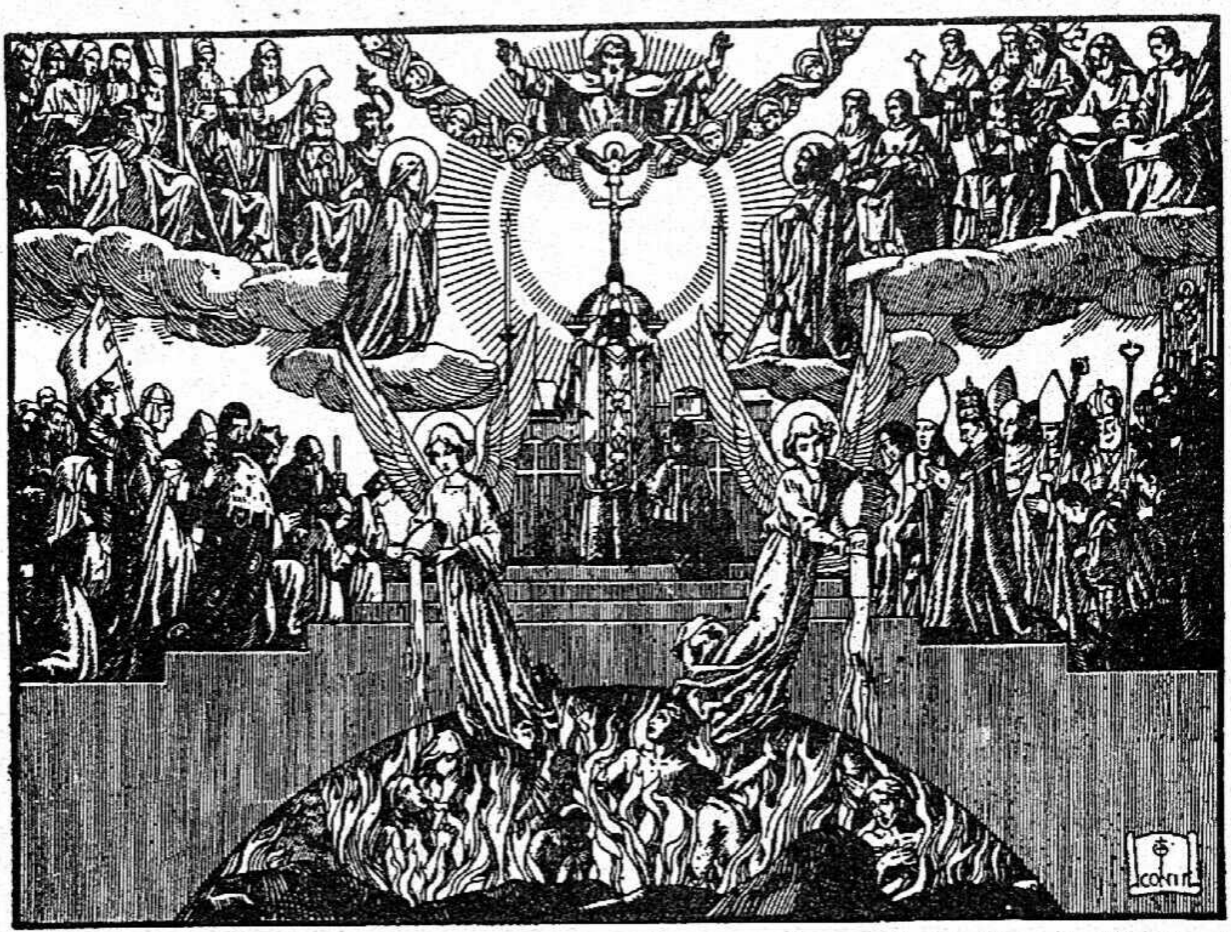
This dogmatic definition contains three points of faith that all Catholics are compelled to believe: (a) that there is a purgatory; (b) that after death souls suffer there for their sins; (c) that the living can extend assistance to such souls.

4. *Reason* demands belief in the existence of purgatory. If a man dies with some slight stain on his soul, a sin of impatience, or an idle word, is he fit to enter heaven? God's sanctity forbids it: "There shall not enter into it anything defiled" (Apoc. 21:27). But must such a soul be consigned to hell? God's mercy and justice forbid it.

Therefore reason concludes the existence of a middle and temporary state of expiation, where the soul is cleansed from all stain of sin before it can be admitted into the perfect holiness and bliss of heaven. "Amen, I say to thee, thou wilt not come out from it until thou hast paid the last penny" (Matt. 5:26).

5. Among nearly all peoples there has persisted a belief that souls must undergo some sort of purification after death. This would point to the doctrine of purgatory.

The Greek story of Prometheus implies a place of purgation. The Egyptians and others believed in the transmigration of souls. Legends and myths of all nations, as well as burial customs, indicate belief in the possibility of helping the dead.



We should be generous in helping the poor souls in purgatory, who long for God. The best thing we can do for them is to have Masses offered for them. The Church puts no limit to the time during which we may pray or offer Masses for the suffering souls in purgatory.

If we cannot have a Mass said, we should at least hear Masses for our dear departed. If God so willed, a single Mass could release all the souls in purgatory. We should offer Masses especially on All Souls' Day and on the anniversaries of death of our relatives and friends.

79. Souls in Purgatory

What pains do the souls in purgatory suffer?—The souls in purgatory suffer from a great longing to be united to God, and from other great pains.

1. Their *chief pain* is the deprivation of the Beatific Vision, the vision of God in the glory of heaven. This temporary deprivation is a most severe punishment, because the poor souls already have a full knowledge of what they are missing.

"As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after thee, O God! my soul hath thirsted after the strong living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" (Ps. 41:2, 3).

2. The general tradition of the Church is that they also *suffer* acutely in other ways.

St. Augustine believes that the sufferings of the poor souls are greater than the sufferings of all the martyrs. St. Thomas believes the least pain there is greater than the greatest on earth.

3. The *greatness* and the *duration* of a soul's sufferings in purgatory vary according to the gravity of the sins committed. One who has lived a long life of sin, but is saved from hell only by a deathbed repentance, will stay in the purging fires of purgatory longer, and suffer there more intensely than a child, who has committed only the venial sins of an ordinary child.

That some souls stay long in purgatory is implied by the fact that the Church puts no limit to the offering of Masses for the dead; some foundations have been going on for centuries, offered for the repose of certain souls. St. Augustine believes that those stay longest in purgatory who have loved the goods of earth more. Some saints have held that certain holy souls in purgatory suffer no pain except their exclusion from the vision of God. Practically all are agreed that in purgatory the souls suffer most in those things in which they sinned most; as the "Imitation of Christ" says: "In what things a man hath most sinned, in those things shall he be most grievously tormented."

4. The poor souls, however, have much *to console* them. They are certain of salvation and the love of God. They are free from temptation: they cannot commit the slightest sin, even of impatience.

They have no worry, anxiety, or distress of mind, for they are sure of deliverance. They are comforted by the prayers of the angels and saints, and of the people on earth.

Will all the souls in purgatory go to heaven?—All the souls in purgatory will go to heaven some day; they will stay in purgatory only as long as they have not atoned for all their sins.

1. The poor souls *cannot help themselves,* for their time for meriting was ended at their death. They cannot therefore merit anything to satisfy for their sins.

This is why we who can still merit by our good works should give some of them as suffrage for the poor souls, so that they may soon be delivered from their prison. We have the special obligation of helping with our prayers and sacrifices the souls of our dead relatives, friends, and benefactors.

2. Although they cannot merit anything for themselves, the poor souls *intercede for* us with their prayers to God.

Thus if we help them, they repay us by their intercession. No one who has a devotion to the holy souls in purgatory has ever asked for their intercession in vain.

In what ways can we help the poor souls in purgatory?—We can help the poor souls in purgatory by Masses, by prayers, and by other good works.

1. *Masses.* The Holy Sacrifice is the greatest help we can offer, because its effect depends on itself, and not on the piety of the priest who offers it. Whenever possible, Gregorian *Masses* should be offered; these consist of thirty Masses celebrated on consecutive days for some deceased person.

If we cannot have a Mass said, we should at least hear Mass for our dear departed. A Mass has infinite merit, for it is the sacrifice of Our Lord Himself! It will surely avail our dead to offer for them God the Son Himself in Holy Mass.

2. *Prayers.* We should pray with devotion for the poor souls. God does not regard the length of the prayer or the words so much as the love in the heart of the one who prays.

There are special prayers enriched with indulgences, applicable to the souls in purgatory. We should also receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist for the poor souls. "Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers if you continue in perseverance" (Judith 4:11).

3. *Alms-giving.* No pompous funeral or profusion of flowers is of any avail for the poor souls in purgatory. As St. John Chrysostom says, "Not by weeping, but by prayer and almsgiving are the dead relieved."

It is better to give to charity the money spent on idle and worldly show, which cannot help the poor souls. Instead of sending costly wreaths to the family of a dead friend, it is an excellent custom instead to have Masses offered for his soul.

4. *The Heroic Act.* By this Act a person surrenders, in behalf of the souls in purgatory, all the satisfaction made to God by his good works, including whatever satisfaction may be offered for him by others during his life and after.

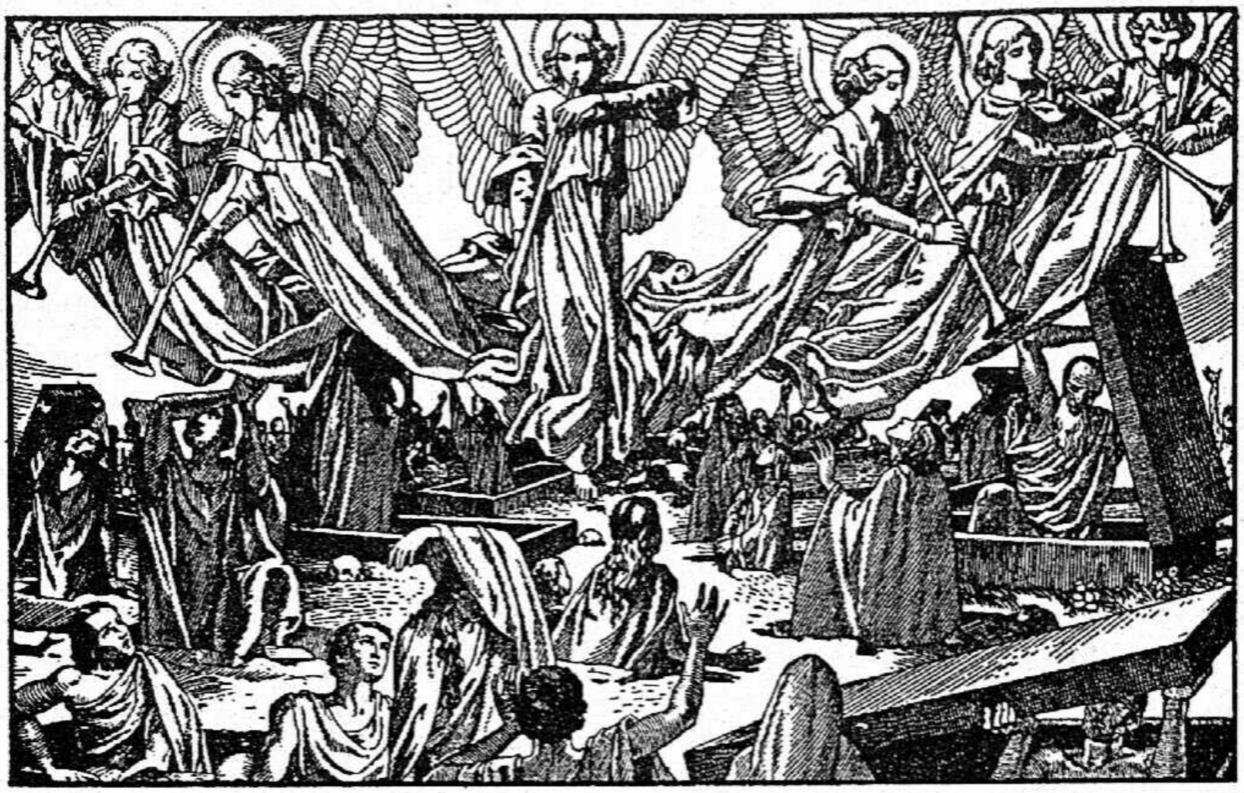
The Heroic Act is enriched with precious favors. One who makes the Act can apply every indulgence gained to the poor souls in purgatory. He may gain a plenary indulgence applicable only to the poor souls: (1) each time he receives Holy Communion; (2) every Monday by hearing Mass in behalf of the poor souls. To gain these indulgences, he must pray in church for the Pope's intentions.

It is an error to suppose that one who gives up his merits, or offers prayers and good works for the poor souls, thereby loses something for himself.

Prayer confers a blessing not only on those prayed for, but also on him who prays. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

5. We should not, however, rely too much on the prayers and sacrifices that our relatives may offer for us after our death. Even granting that they will remember us often and fervently in prayers, it is nevertheless true that works offered in suffrage for souls avail them only to a limited extent.

God gives more value to a little voluntary penance done here on earth than to disciplines offered for that soul after death. As a Saint aptly said, "One Mass devoutly heard during life is worth more than a great sum left for the celebration of a hundred Masses after death."



Belief in the resurrection is very consoling. It was this belief that gave the early Christians and martyrs such fortitude under persecutions. Firm in this belief, we should not mourn for our beloved dead excessively: "But we would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep, lest you should grieve, even as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13). We shall see them again in the resurrection.

We should remember the words of Our Lord, Who will raise us from the dead: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, even if he die, shall live; and whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

80. Resurrection of the Body

What is meant by the "resurrection of the body"? – By "the resurrection of the body" is meant that at the end of the world the bodies of all men will rise from the earth and be united again to their souls, nevermore to be separated.

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise" (1 Cor. 15:52).

1. Our Lord often *foretold* the resurrection of the body.

"For the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life; but they who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28-29).

2. Our Lord said that the *Blessed Sacrament* gives immortality also to the body.

"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting and I will raise him up" (John 6:55).

3. Christ redeemed the *whole man*, and not the soul alone.

Hence the body must, in the case of the just, rise to eternal life. The body of man was originally destined for immortality, and lost it only with Adam's sin. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made to live" (1 Cor. 15:22). "He who raised up Jesus will raise up us also with Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:14). "Our Lord Jesus Christ will refashion the body of our lowliness" (Phil. 3:21).

4. The resurrection of the body is not an extraordinary idea. If we look about us in nature, we may see *types of the resurrection* of the body.

In spring, flowers and trees wake up to new life after the death of winter. The seed, buried like a corpse in the ground, sprouts a living tree or bush. The body itself rises to new vigor after sleep, which is a type of death.

Will our risen bodies be the same as those we had on earth?—Yes, our risen bodies will be the same as those we had on earth.

1. If our risen bodies were not those we had on earth, they would not be our bodies, and we would not be the same persons.

It could not be said then that there was a resurrection, nor that our bodies had risen. The words of Job are most consoling in the truth they contain: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth" (Job 19:25).

2. During life the body is *constantly changing*, putting on new growth and throwing away waste in bone, muscle, and skin. Yet it is *always the same body*.

So will it be in the resurrection. Whatever changes there are, they will not affect the sameness of the body we have on earth. In death the body only sleeps, awaiting the last day. Our Lord Himself said that Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus were asleep, although He knew they were dead.

3. Our bodies will rise again even though they will have been *reduced to dust*. Everything is possible to God. He Who created angels and men and the whole universe out of nothing will certainly not find any difficulty in gathering together the elements of the body even if they were scattered throughout the world, nor in giving them life once more. God has almighty power.

Christ Himself raised three persons from the dead, according to Holy Scripture. At His resurrection, the bodies of many rose from the graves. Holy men and women have in the name of Christ brought back hundreds to life.

Why will the bodies of the just rise?—The bodies of the just will rise to share forever in the glory of their souls.

"For this corruptible body must put on incorruption, and this mortal body must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:53).

1. The risen body will be radiant and beautiful, if it is of a just person. It will have the qualities of Our Lord's risen Body, characterized by:

(a) Impassibility.

By this quality the risen body will no longer be subject to pain, disease, death, hunger, thirst, fatigue, sleep, heat or cold. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying" (Apoc. 21:4).

(b) Brightness.

By this quality, the risen body will shine with great radiance and glory. "Then the just will shine forth like the sun, in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43).

(c) Agility.

This quality will enable the risen body to pass with the quickness of thought to all parts of the universe.

(d) Subtility, or spirituality.

This quality will enable the risen body to penetrate material substances, even as Our Lord, Who arose from the tomb and entered the Cenacle while doors and windows were barred. "What is sown a natural body rises a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44).

2. The risen body, united to the soul, will remain in heaven forever, to glory in the presence of and in union with God.

When we are disheartened by the miseries of this life, misfortune, sickness, pains, and many other ills, including the difficulty of warding off sin, let us find consolation in the thought that our body, now so weak and imperfect, will, if we persevere in the love and service of God, some day rise in glory and stand continually in His presence. "If the earthly house in which we dwell be destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made by human hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1).

Has the body of any human person ever been raised from the dead and taken into heaven? — By the special privilege of her Assumption, the body of the Blessed Virgin Mary, preserved from corruption, was raised from the dead and taken into heaven.

"Assumption" in this sense means the taking up of the Blessed Virgin's body into heaven. Her Assumption differs from Christ's Ascension, in that He went up to heaven, body and soul, by His own unaided power, whereas Our Lady was taken up by the power of God, not her own. The dogma of the Assumption was proclaimed November 1, 1950.

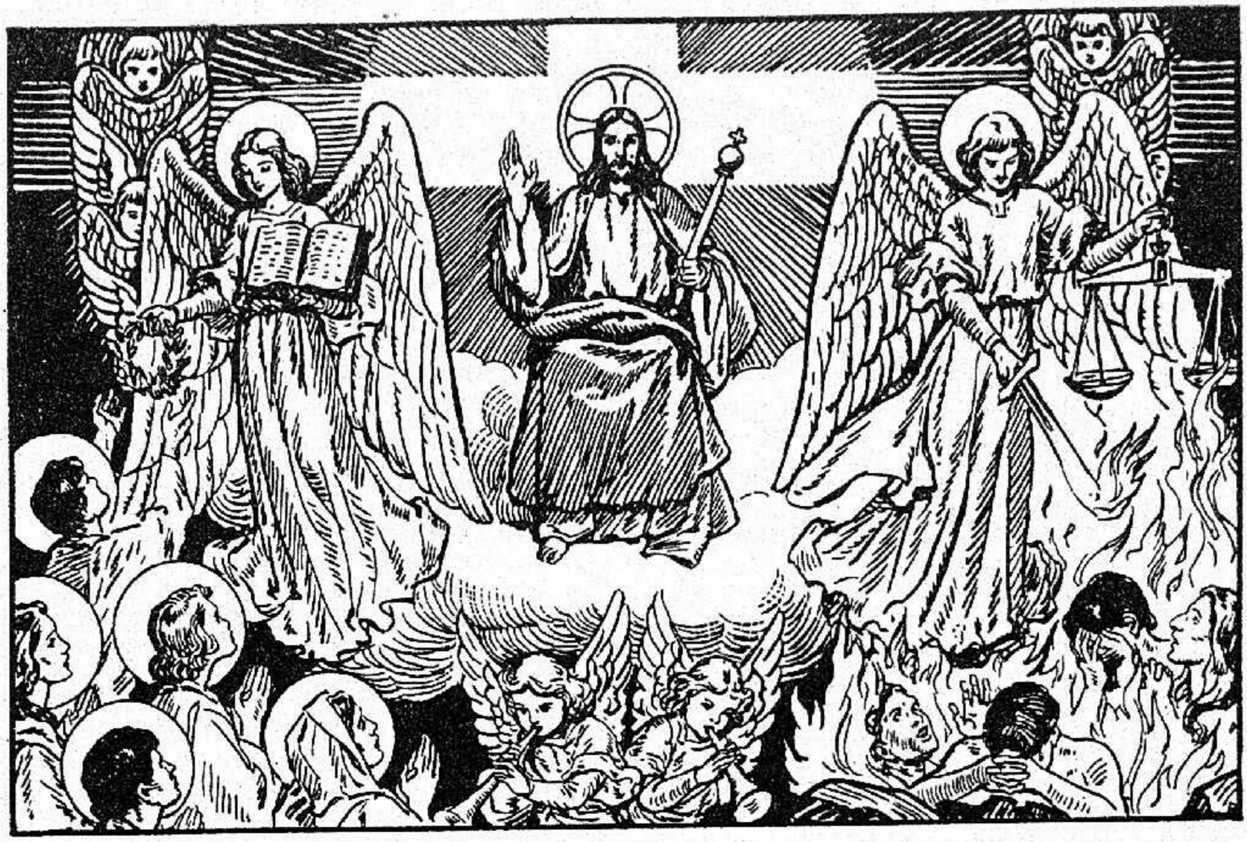
Why will the bodies of the damned also rise?—The bodies of the damned will also rise, to share in the eternal punishment of their souls.

1. The risen body of the wicked will be hideous and repulsive, a horror to behold.

This should give pause to those whose chief thought on earth is to pamper and decorate their bodies. This life will last only a few decades; but in the resurrection there will be an eternity. Should we prefer to be painted and "beautiful" for these few decades, and become an object of aversion for all eternity; or pay less attention to our body here on earth, so as to attain glory forever?

2. The risen bodies of the wicked, united to their souls, will remain condemned in hell forever, their companions other wicked souls, and devils, followers of Satan.

And in hell, the body, as well as the soul, will suffer torments such as we here on earth cannot even imagine. What will it profit those lost souls then, that here they had luxuries and pleasures?



The General Judgment will take place at the end of the world. It is a public repetition of the particular judgment. Then all that each has thought, said, done, or omitted will be known to everybody. The just will receive their reward, and the wicked will be punished. At the General Judgment Jesus Christ will be the Judge. Then complete justice will be meted out to all, to the souls united with the bodies.

81. General Judgment

(Seventh and Twelfth Articles of the Apostles' Creed.)

What is the judgment called which will be passed on all men immediately after the general resurrection?—The judgment which will be passed on all men immediately after the general resurrection is called the general judgment.

1. The Last or General Judgment will take place *at the end of the world,* but when that will be, no man knows.

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36). After the Ascension angels told the Apostles that Christ will come again as Judge: "This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way, as you have seen him going up to heaven" (Acts 1:11).

2. Our Lord *predicted* that signs will precede the Last Judgment, which He Himself described; He will be the Judge.

(a) The Gospel will be preached in the whole world.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a witness to all nations; and then will come the end". (Matt. 24:14).

(b) There will be a great *apostasy* from faith; people will lose themselves in evil.

"Yet when the Son of Man comes, will he find, do you think, faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). "And as it came to pass in the days of Noe, even so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noe entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. In the same wise will it be on the day that the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-27, 30).

(c) *Antichrist* will appear and work false miracles.

St. Paul speaks of "the man of sin . . . the son of perdition, who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God, and gives himself out as if he were God" (2 Thes. 2:4).

What will take place on the last day?—On the last day these events will take place:

1. The earth and the heavens will show *signs;* the stars will fall. In the heavens the sign of the Son of Man will appear. It is believed that this sign is the Cross.

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from heaven. . . . And then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" (Matt. 24:29).

2. *Jesus Christ,* in great power and majesty, accompanied by the angels, will come in the clouds of heaven.

"For as the lightning comes forth from the east and shines even to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. . . . And they will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty" (Matt. 24:27, 30).

3. The trumpet will sound, and all the dead will spring to life in a moment; they will be instantly *reunited to their souls,* and come to judgment.

"Behold, I come quickly . . . to render to each one according to his works" (Apoc. 22:12). "And he will send forth his angels with a trumpet and a great sound, and they will gather his elect from the four winds" (Matt. 24:31).

4. From these statements we are not to conclude that everybody will perceive the divine *essence* at the day of judgment. This cannot happen without completeness of joy; and the wicked can never see God.

The lost souls will "see God" behind some kind of veil so that they do not delight in His divinity; they will have some kind of perception of His Majesty, and recognize His justice.

If every one is judged immediately after death, why will there be a general judgment?—Although every one is judged immediately after death, it is fitting that there be a general judgment, in order that the justice, wisdom, and mercy of God may be glorified in the presence of all.

1. The last or General Judgment will be a *public repetition* of the particular judgment. The Judge and the matters taken up will be identical. Then Jesus will bring to light "the hidden things of darkness."

"And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. And another scroll was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the scrolls" (Apoc. 20:12).

2. All men and all angels, good and bad, will be *present to hear* the judgment of each one. "For there is nothing hidden that will not be made manifest, nor anything concealed that will not be known" (Luke 8:17).

Then will the unjust say these words, as they consider the just: "These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints. . . . What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away" (Wis. 5:3-9).

3. Our Lord will place the good on His *right* hand, and the wicked on His *left.* To the *just* Christ will say: "Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). To the *wicked* He will say: "Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41).

A great fear and instant realization of their sentence will fall upon the wicked. And they will say to the mountains and the rocks: "Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Apoc. 6:16). Immediately the good will go body and soul to heaven, and the wicked will fall body and soul into *hell.* "And these will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life" (Matt. 25:46).

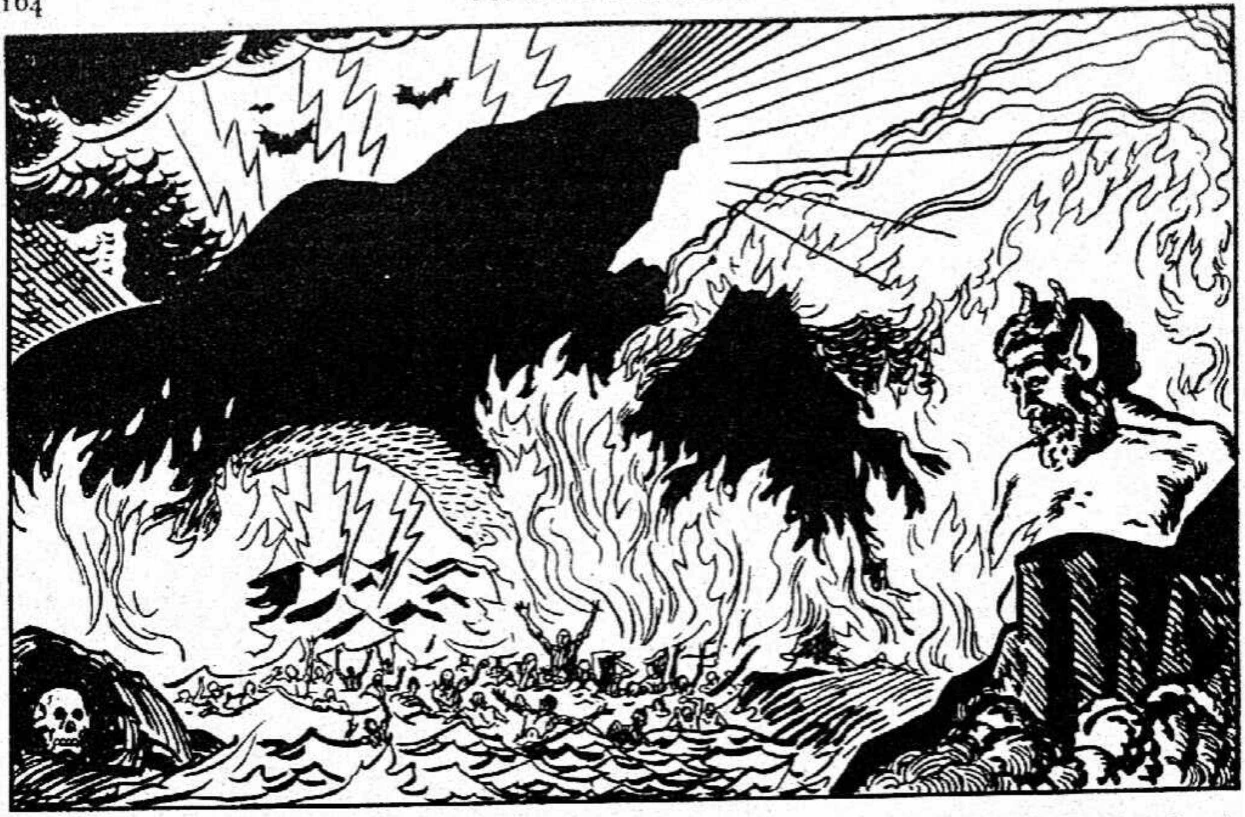
4. The General Judgment is necessary in order:

(a) To *vindicate* God's providence in the government of the world, and to disclose both the good and the evil that men have done, in order to reveal God's justice, wisdom, and mercy. Man is a social, as well as an individual being; hence the necessity for a general, as well as a particular judgment.

On that day will men see how often God has granted them graces, and they have rejected them, how often God has turned even their evil acts to their advantage, that they might repent! Then will men see how much that took up time and thought on earth was folly in the eyes of God, and how what the world called nonsense and mocked was really heavenly wisdom. As St. Paul says: "We, for our part, preach a crucified Christ—to the Jews indeed a stumbling-block and to the Gentiles foolishness" (1 Cor. 1:23).

(b) To give the just the *public honor* due them, and the wicked the public shame they deserve, and to make the body share in the reward or punishment of the soul with which it shared good or evil on earth.

At the Last Judgment all our thoughts, words, and deeds, public and secret, will be made known to all creation. This fact should urge us to avoid everything of which we should then be ashamed made public. When we are tempted let us remember that the "hidden things of darkness" will be revealed on the last day.



The wicked in hell suffer dreadful torments. They feel despair, remorse, envy, and hopelessness, because they know that they can never obtain the one thing necessary for happiness. They can never see and enjoy God. They are tortured with envy of the blessed in heaven. They are tormented with shame because their sins will be known to all entirely and completely. After the general judgment their bodies will share the pains of their souls. They will be in torments for all eternity.

82. The Torments of Hell

Who are punished in hell?—Those are punished in hell who die in mortal sin; they are deprived of the vision of God and suffer dreadful torments, especially that of fire, for all eternity.

1. *Christ Himself,* in fifteen places in Holy Scripture, refers to the punishment of hell, the horrible abode of the wicked.

Scripture calls hell "a place of torments," "an unquenchable fire," "everlasting fire," "the bottomless pit," "everlasting punishment," "outer darkness."

2. All who die in mortal sin, even with only a *single unrepented and unforgiven mortal sin,* are sent to hell.

God is continually calling sinners to repentance by numberless graces. He instituted a Church to teach them the way to heaven, to show them what to avoid. He instituted the sacrament of penance to cleanse from all sin, to assure the sinner that without any doubt God forgives him. He stands as the loving Father, awaiting with anxiety the return of the prodigal. If after all these graces the sinner persists in sin, he has only himself to blame when he is sent to hell.

3. God does not wish to send anyone to hell. His only desire would be to have all His children with Him in the bliss of heaven. The sinner *forces* God to punish him in hell, by defying Him and refusing to recognize His authority. When a vile creature defies his infinite Creator, no punishment is too great.

Not one single sinner is sent to hell except by *his own fault.* No one is sent to hell unless he has wilfully, deliberately, and knowingly refused to obey the commands of God. We can truly say that the fetters of hell are of man's own fashioning. If a man is given a bright light, and he purposely blows it out, can he blame anyone else for the dark?

What pains will the condemned suffer in hell?—The condemned in hell will suffer the pain of loss and the pain of sense.

But no one can ever describe or understand adequately the torments of hell, just as no one can realize the bliss of heaven.

1. ***The pain of loss.*** The wicked in hell know what they rejected and lost: God. This pain will be the greatest torment of hell, for the human soul is made for God.

(a) They feel despair, remorse, envy, and hopelessness, because they know that they can never obtain the one thing needed for happiness: they can never see God.

The greater the value of what is lost, the greater is the pain of loss. But the sinners in hell have lost God, of infinite worth. Their pain of loss must be in proportion.

(b) Instead of God and the angels and saints, the sinners in hell have *devils and loathsome criminals* for eternal companions. Hell contains nothing good. St. Paul truly says: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

There is *no love* in hell. The damned hate God, hate each other, and hate themselves. St. Chrysostom says: "Insupportable is the fire of hell—who doth not know it?—and its torments are awful; but if one were to heap a thousand hell-fires one on the other it would be as nothing compared with the punishment of being excluded from the blessed glory of heaven, of being hated by Christ, and of being compelled to hear Him say, 'I know you not!'"

2. ***The pain of sense.*** The wicked will suffer from fire and the torments inflicted on all the senses, the sight, the hearing, the smell, the taste, the touch. After the resurrection, the bodies of the damned will suffer with their souls. In this life sinners sin by their senses. In the same way they will be punished in hell. "By what things a man sinneth, *by the same he also is tormented.*"

Christ calls hell an "unquenchable fire". The sensation of burning is the greatest pain man can conceive of. If one cannot stand for a brief instant putting his finger in the flame of a candle, how can he endure the fire of hell?

Christ calls hell "the outer darkness"; it is fire that gives no light, because in hell the damned never see God, the source of eternal light. Hell is the place where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth", where the "worm never dies".

3. The punishment in hell is *not the same* for all. Each sinner will be punished according to the measure of his offenses.

Just as in heaven the bliss and glory of the saints differ, so in hell the torments and pains of the wicked differ. God is just: He will not punish a man who has committed only one mortal sin in the same measure that He punishes one who has lived a long life of wickedness.

4. The pains of hell will last *for all eternity.* If the punishment of hell were temporary, many sinners might prefer to gratify their passions on earth, no matter at what cost and penalty in hell, if it were to have an end. The fear of hell should urge us to lead a good life. *Nothing on earth is worth one moment in hell; and do we choose to suffer it for all eternity?*

Just as the bliss of heaven will last for all eternity, so will the pains of hell; and on and on and on, without end, forever. "And the smoke of their torments goes up for ever and ever; and they rest neither day nor night" (Apoc. 14:11). Christ Himself said: "And if thy hand or thy foot is an occasion of sin to thee, cut it off and cast it from thee! It is better for thee to enter life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire" (Matt. 18:8).

Why did a good God create such a fearful place as hell?—A good God created such a fearful place as hell, because He is just, and must punish the sinner.

1. The sinner is a traitor to God Who created him.

God created this world and all creatures. He owns them. They must therefore be absolutely obedient to His will. If a creature revolts and defies God, then he must be treated as an *enemy.*

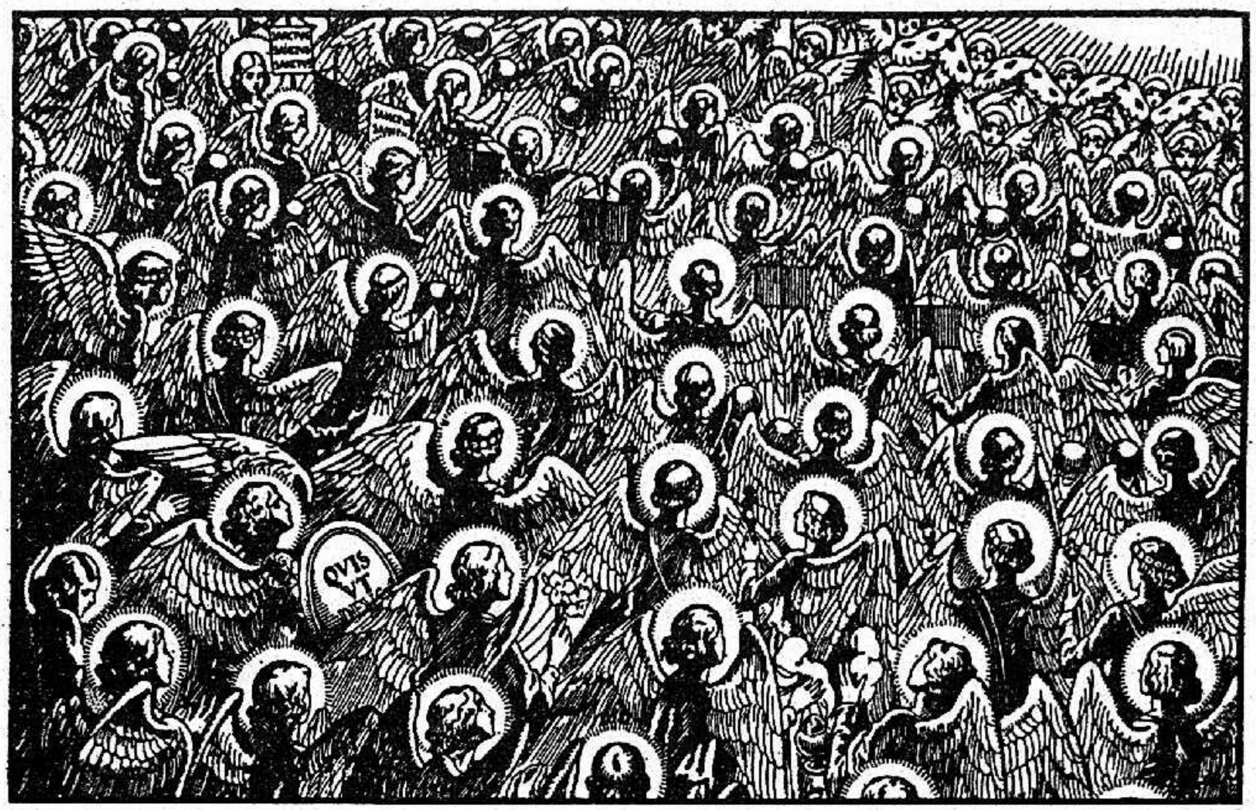
2. It is the opinion of Doctors of the Church that no one in hell is punished as much as he deserves. God sent us His own beloved Son, to suffer incredible agonies and death, so that we may be saved from eternal damnation. Can such a God be anything but merciful?

We know the mercy of God. We know how glad He is to receive back the repentant sinner. We therefore know that He will not punish too severely, that whatever punishment He metes out will be just.

3. We should have *no fear* of hell if we do our duty. ***God will not send us to hell, unless we force Him.***

Let us remember that our Judge will be Jesus Christ, Who so loved us that He died on the cross for us. He is more eager to pass a favorable sentence on us than we are to receive it. We should have *confidence* in Him, as little children. "The Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:56). The Lord "is long-suffering, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Let us remember always to plead with God for our souls. We can refuse God, but God can never refuse us: on this account salvation is in our hands.



Words can never give any idea of the bliss of heaven, where the good will continually enjoy God, and be in the company of the saints and angels. Of heaven David speaks: "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. 35:9). St. John says of the blessed: "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more" (Apoc. 21:4).

83. Life Everlasting: Heaven

What do we mean by "life everlasting"? —By "life everlasting" we mean that there will be another existence after this present life, and in it the just will be happy for all eternity.

In that life the just will dwell in heaven with God, in *perfect* and *everlasting happiness*. Heaven is both a place and a state: Our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven, and ascended into it. Heaven is a *state:* even when the Blessed Virgin Mary, for example, appears to men, she does not leave heaven, which she carries with her, in the state of her soul.

This is why the good and holy have a foretaste of heaven even here on earth, in the peace and joy they possess in their hearts. "And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,—'Behold the dwelling of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God' " (Apoc. 21:2-3).

Who are rewarded in heaven?—Those are rewarded in heaven who die in the state of grace and have been purified in purgatory, if necessary, from all venial sin and all debt of temporal punishment; they see God face to face, and share forever in His glory and happiness.

We do not obtain heaven without working for it. He that for God's sake has suffered most and given up most will get the greatest reward in heaven. "He who loves his life, loses it; and he who hates his life in this world, keeps it unto life everlasting" (John 12:25). As St. Paul says: "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21).

1. The greatest joy of heaven is the ***Beatific Vision.*** This is the sight of God face to face. This vision is called *beatific,* because it completely fills with joy those who possess it. They know and love God to their utmost capacity, and are known and loved by God in return. The Beatific Vision

will *satisfy completely and supremely* all our desires. Having God, we shall never wish for anything else. "One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8).

On earth, even when we obtain the dearest desires of our heart, we can never be completely happy. "We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I have been known" (1 Cor. 13:12). In heaven, "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. 35:9).

2. The other joys and perfections of heaven will be numberless and of infinite variety. There will be neither sin, nor death, nor sorrow, nothing to cause trouble or affliction, *nothing to mar* the eternal bliss.

"They shall neither hunger nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun strike them nor any heat . . . and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Apoc. 7:16-17).

3. Our *companions* will be the most Holy Virgin Mary, the Angels and the Saints. We shall be reunited with those we have loved on earth, and we shall love them there more intensely. There will be *no more separation*. Whatever we have desired to know here on earth, we shall *learn* in heaven. All the *mysteries* of faith and science will be revealed. After the resurrection, we shall have our *bodily senses* in heaven, and by them relish joys unending.

Holy Scripture says of heaven: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). "The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

4. This bliss will last *for all eternity*. The joys of heaven will always delight. And we shall have no fear of their ending, for heaven will be everlasting. Eternity has *no measure*. It is like a circle: We can spend our whole life going around a circle, but we shall never find an end. Each part is only the beginning.

Eternity has *no end*. We can never have a proper conception of its duration, because we have nothing similar to eternity. Millions of ages are as nothing compared to eternity. If a bird were to carry away from the ocean one drop of water every thousand years, a time will come when it will have carried away the whole ocean. But that time is less than the shortest moment, if compared to eternity.

5. The reward and bliss of heaven will not be the same for all.

(a) The heavenly reward is given according to the goodness of the life each led on earth. In the same measure as we have loved God, He will reward us. However, each will be completely and supremely happy, because each will receive according to the *fulness of his capacity*. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another of the stars" (1 Cor. 15:41).

In a similar way, if we fill a small glass and a great glass full to overflowing with water, one contains more than the other, yet neither can receive one more drop. Martyrs, Virgins, Doctors, that is, teachers of truth and religion, are promised a special joy and glory in heaven.

(b) In the same way *bodies*, after joining the souls at the resurrection, will differ in brilliancy and beauty as star differs from star in glory. But all will be perfect, without defect or blemish.

Yet among the blessed there will be no envy. As St. Francis of Sales said: two children receive from their father each a piece of cloth to make a garment. The smaller child will not envy his brother the bigger garment, but will be quite satisfied with the one that fits him.

(c) The degree of glory of the blessed in heaven can neither be added to nor diminished for all eternity. And yet there are what we might term incidental glories: as for example, on the feast days of the Saints, when special Masses and commemorations are held in their honor, or when more people pay veneration, etc.

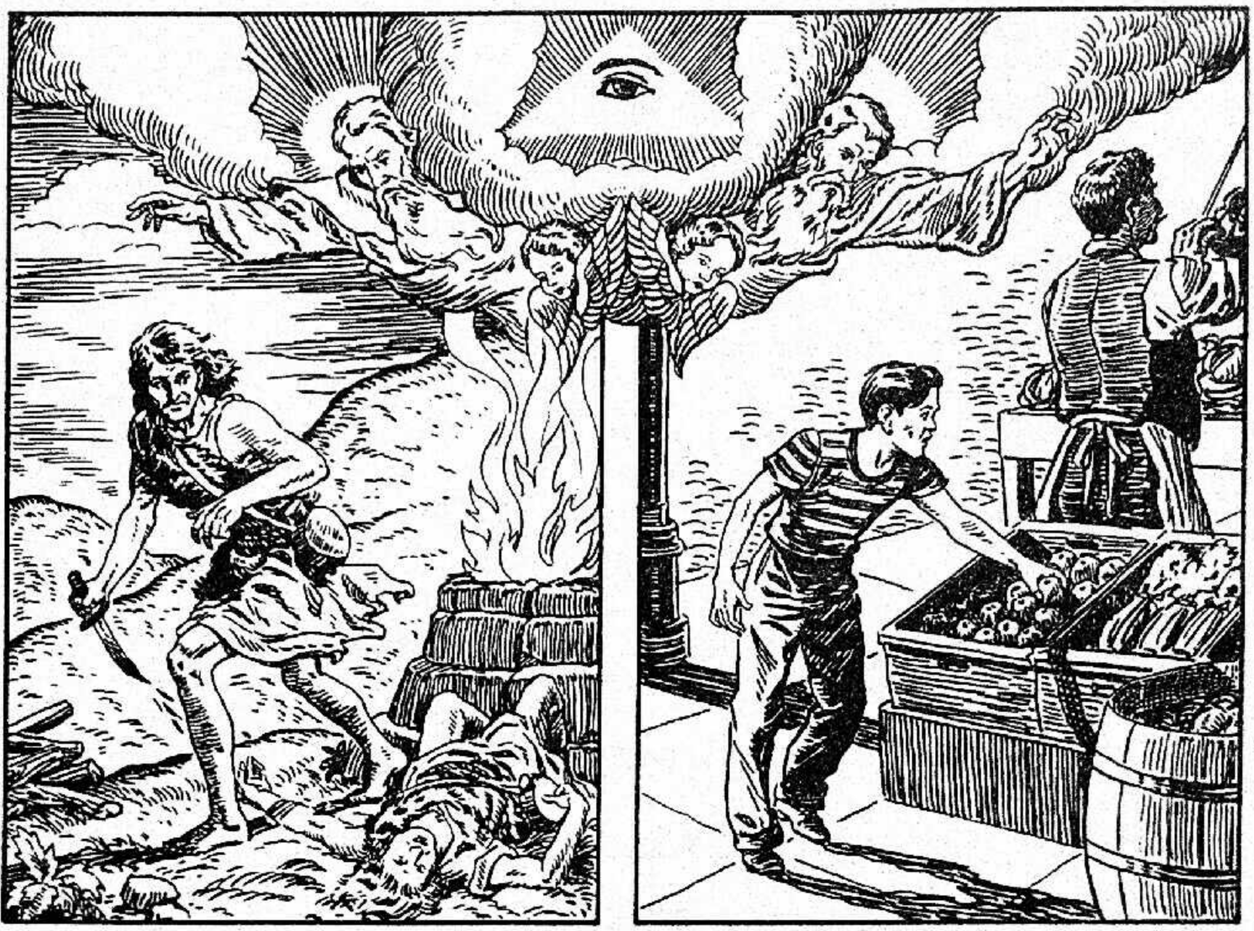
"And night shall be no more, and they shall have no need of light of lamp, or light of sun, for the Lord God will shed light upon them; and they shall reign forever and ever" (Apoc. 22:5).

What is meant by the word "Amen", with which we end the Apostles' Creed?— By the word "Amen", with which we end the Apostles' Creed, is meant "So it is", or "So be it"; the word expresses our firm belief in all the doctrines that the Creed contains.

Our Lord often used the word "Amen", usually as a solemnly positive affirmation: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). "Amen, amen, I say to you, you shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51).

PART TWO

What To Do:
The Commandments
of God
of The Church



1. Conscience is often called the voice of God within us. It bids us do what is right and avoid what is wrong. Cain, who lived long before the Ten Commandments were given to Moses, knew by his conscience that it was wicked to slay his brother.

2. When one is tempted to steal, one seems to hear a warning voice saying, "Do not steal. Theft is an offense against God." That is conscience.

84. God's Law; Conscience

Besides believing what God has revealed, what else must we do to be saved?—Besides believing what God has revealed, we must keep His law.

"But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17).

1. The law of God is contained in both natural and revealed law. *Natural law* is imprinted by God in the hearts and minds of all men. It teaches the most important rules of morality: homage due to God, treatment of others as we expect others to treat us, the evil of wilful injury to oneself, the virtue of truth and honesty. Thus natural law is a definite expression of God's will, requiring obedience.

For example, a child, or a pagan, who has never heard of Ten Commandments, feels guilty when he has done something wrong. He has an instinctive knowledge of the law of nature written by God in his heart, telling him what is right and what wrong.

2. Besides the natural law, there is the *revealed law,* chiefly composed of the Ten Commandments and the two precepts of charity. The revealed law is only a repetition and amplification of the natural law.

The Ten Commandments, which were given to the Jews through Moses, were not revoked by Jesus Christ; on the contrary they were amplified and fulfilled. "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). "And by this we can be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says that he knows him, and does not keep his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3-4).

3. God's law — that divine reason and will of God — is perceived by men through the

light of the intellect, by the voice of their conscience.

What is conscience?—Conscience is the manifestation of God's will that is made to men by the voice of reason, by the dictates of their intellect.

1. Conscience is often called the "voice of reason" or ***"voice of God"***, because it bids us do right and avoid wrong. Cain, who lived a long time before Moses, knew that he had committed evil in slaying Abel. Even today, in pagan countries which have never heard of the commandments, men know right from wrong *by their conscience.* By it, they know God; it bids them obey.

As St. Paul, speaking of the non-Jews who did not know the Jewish law, said: "The Gentiles, who have no law, do by nature what the Law prescribes. They show the work of the law written in their hearts. Their conscience bears witness to them" (Rom. 2:14-15).

2. If we always obey the dictates of our conscience, we shall never offend God. It is a guide that He expects us to follow. It arises from knowledge of the law, whether natural or revealed. Before any action, conscience speaks *either in favor or against.* After the action, according as we have followed or disregarded it, conscience fills us with peace or disquiet.

If a person is tempted to steal, he seems to hear an inward voice saying: "Do not steal. You know it is wrong to steal." This inward voice is *conscience.* Conscience tells us that God is our Lawgiver,—our Judge, Reward, and Avenger.

When is conscience erroneous?—Conscience is erroneous when we think that something right is wrong, or that something wrong is right.

1. An erroneous conscience arises from ignorance or a faulty knowledge of the law. As long as a person who has an erroneous conscience knows no better, he is not responsible for the evil he may do by following it. An erroneous conscience is a *false* one.

For example, a child tells a lie in order to save his younger brother from punishment. He thinks his duty to protect his little brother is superior to the telling of the truth. He has an erroneous conscience, and in this case commits no sin. However, everyone is required to strive for a correct knowledge of the law by studying his religion. In that way he will form a correct or right conscience.

2. If a person with an erroneous conscience believes something right is wrong, and nevertheless does it, he is guilty of sin, because he has violated his conscience, and therefore willed to do wrong.

A man may believe that God prohibits gambling in a lottery. If he nevertheless participates, he sins, because he has violated his conscience.

3. One has a *doubtful* conscience when one does not know whether something is right or wrong. We should not act if we have a doubtful conscience about something, but wait till we can clear the matter up.

If one has a doubtful conscience, but yet must do something and cannot wait, he should say to himself that if he knew it was wrong, then he would not do it. Then even if he makes up his mind and does it, and it is really wrong, he is not guilty of sin.

What is a scrupulous conscience?—A scrupulous conscience is a sick conscience that sees sin where there is none.

1. A scrupulous person looks on *temptations* as sins. We must not encourage a scrupulous conscience. It is a mark of lack of confidence in the goodness of God.

When a scrupulous person is tempted, he worries himself sick, believing he has committed sin, even when he has not yielded to the temptation one whit, even when he has actually abhorred it.

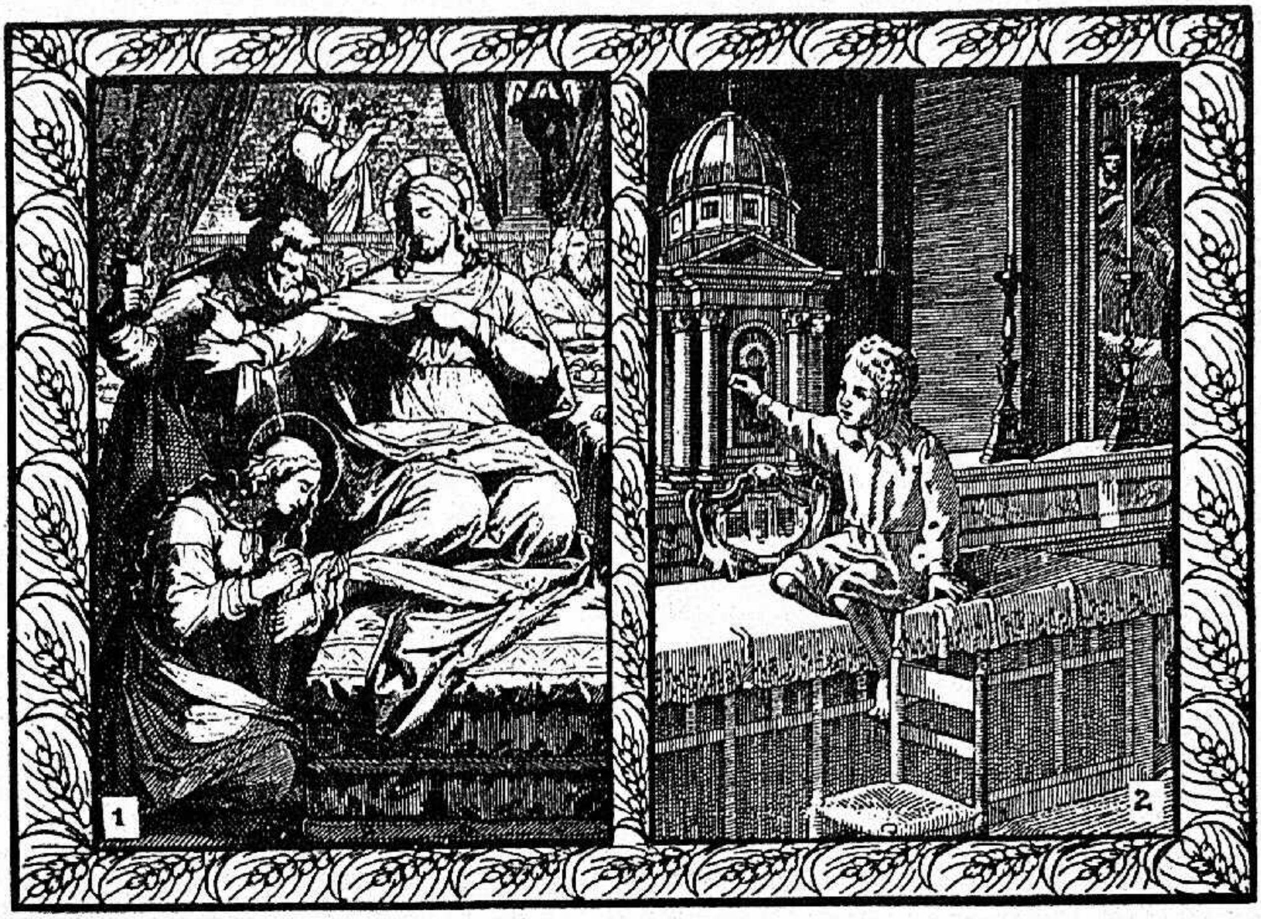
2. The opposite of a scrupulous conscience is an unscrupulous or *lax* conscience. One with such a lax conscience convinces himself that man is too weak to resist sin, and so all sin is negligible. "To err is human" is his constant motto.

A lax conscience is careless; it makes light of ordinary sins, and looks upon grave sins as negligible. After some time a lax conscience increases in laxness until the person loses practically all sense of wrong. Thus he becomes a habitual sinner. We then say that he has *no conscience.*

What is a delicate or tender conscience?—A delicate or tender conscience is one which impels us to avoid anything in the slightest degree evil.

We should be most careful to keep our conscience delicate. It is a terrible thing for one to live as if he had no conscience. It is a tender conscience that escapes such things as self-reproach, shame, remorse, dismay, and fear, because it is ever before God, Who gives it peace and hope.

A tender conscience is the conscience of the *saints.* It is the conscience that good Christians should cultivate. Then they will not do anything the least displeasing to God.



The love of God causes us to hate sin and do good. Mary Magdalen (1) after her conversion, loved God fully. She hated sin so much that she never again committed any, although she had previously been a great sinner.

In the picture (2) is shown the child who, being told that Jesus is in the tabernacle, knocks to beg Him make his father, an unbeliever, believe in God. Let us, in imitation of this child, knock at the heart of Jesus. He will answer our prayer.

85. The Great Commandments

Which are the two great commandments that contain the whole law of God?—The two great commandments that contain the whole law of God are:

first, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength;

second, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Who revealed to us the two great commandments?—Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed to us the two great commandments.

Once a doctor of the law asked Jesus: "Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus said to him: "Thou shalt *love the Lord thy God* with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:36-39).

1. The love of God is the greatest commandment, because *it includes all other commandments.*

If we truly love God, we will do nothing to offend Him. We would not commit sin, because sin is displeasing to Him. We would obey all the commandments. Not only that; if we truly love Him, we will do things which He does not require, but which we know will *please* Him.

2. The two great commandments are *inseparably united,* so that one cannot be observed without the other. As Holy Scripture says, "If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20).

The greater our love of God, the more we shall love our fellowmen. And the more zealously we help our fellowmen for God's sake, the more perfectly we serve God. Our love of God can best be gauged by our love of neighbor.

3. More specifically, the first great commandment embraces the first *three* of the Ten Commandments; the second great commandment embraces the last *seven*.

The two great commandments affect and control all the powers of man: his will, his understanding, his emotions, and his actions. Would we not have a perfect world, needing no other laws, if all men obeyed these two commandments strictly? For this reason Our Lord said, "On these two commandments depend the whole Law" (Matt. 22:40).

Why should we love God?—We should love God because:

1. He is infinitely *good and perfect and worthy of love*. "One there is who is good, that is God" (Matt. 19:17).

We can see the goodness and perfection of God all around us. If we meditate on His goodness, we shall never tire of loving Him. We love our parents and friends because they are good. Their goodness is nothing compared to the goodness of God.

2 He *loves* us, and is always doing *good* to us. We only have to think of ourselves and our lives to find an innumerable number of favors He has granted us.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that those who believe in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John 3:16). "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee" (Jer. 31:3). "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights" (James 1:17).

3. He *wants* and *commands* us to love Him. We are God's creatures. His slightest desires are law to us. How much more should we obey His solemn commands!

Our Lord said very clearly: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength" (Mark 12:30).

When is our love of God perfect?—Our love of God is perfect when we love Him above all things, for His own sake.

1. We love God *above all things* when we would rather lose life, property, friends, and all things else, *rather than offend* Him; when we are ready to do anything in order to resemble Him, to give Him pleasure.

"He who loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37). God permits us to love creatures, urges us to love our fellowmen; but such love must be only for God's sake, subject to the love of God. God wishes us to love Him in His creatures, not the creatures for their own sakes. He will not take second place in our affections. "I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous" (Ex. 20:5). He will not permit us to love anything which detracts one whit from our complete love of Him.

2. We love God *for His own sake* when we love Him for His infinite perfection.

We love God for His own sake when we love Him because He is the highest good and most worthy of love.

3 Our love of God is not perfect when we love Him only because He gives us gifts, or threatens us with punishment, or promises us heaven.

Nevertheless, imperfect love of God is often the beginning of perfect love. Little by little perfect love develops from it.

How do we prove our love of God?—We prove our love of God by obedience to His commandments.

"If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

1. We show our love more by *deeds* than by words. St. John says: "My dear children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed" (1 John 3:18).

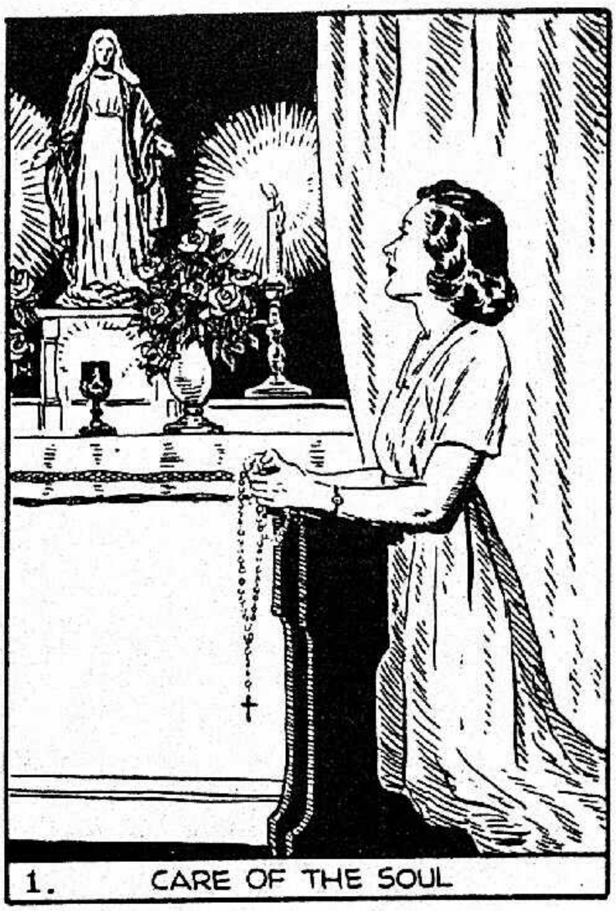
The love of God is not a mere delight in thinking of Him; it consists rather of an act of the will, to *live* a godly life on account of that love. However, the love of God also makes us *speak* and *think* of Him frequently, since it is a human trait to do so regarding the object of affection. One who loves God is united with Him at every moment in every fiber of his being: in thought, word, and deed. "Where thy treasure is, there thy heart also will be" (Matt. 6:21).

2. We show greater love, when we not only avoid what God forbids, but do what will give Him pleasure.

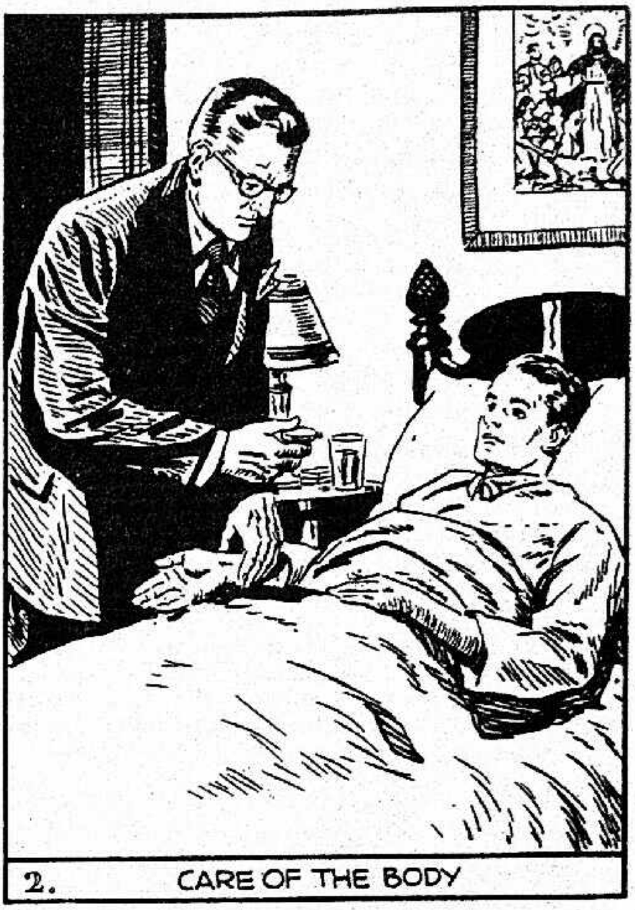
Thus God does not command us to go to Mass every day, but if we do so, He is pleased by this mark of our love.

3. We *increase* our love of God by loving Him. "Practice makes perfect." The more we love Him, the more we can love Him. Every piece of good work we do makes us grow in God's love.

We show our love of God by accepting all that comes from His hand. One who habitually murmurs at all inconveniences, sickness, misfortune, etc., does not possess Christian love of God, Who never promised us deliverance from all earthly ills.



1. CARE OF THE SOUL



2. CARE OF THE BODY

God commands us to love ourselves. We must thus care for both our body and our soul. Since the soul is far more precious than the body, we should give it more careful attention. Every day we must pray for grace to live according to God's will.

Care for the body includes taking proper treatment and medicine when we are ill (2). Anything against health violates the duty to love ourselves.

86. Love of Ourselves

Why must we love ourselves?—We must love ourselves because:

1. God wishes and requires it. Our Lord said: *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"* (Matt. 22:39).

Thus He made the love of self the measure of love for others. St. Augustine says: "Learn first to love God, then to love thyself, then thy neighbor as thyself." Each man is his own closest neighbor.

2. We are made after God's image. We must therefore reverence God's image in ourselves, just as we are bound to respect it in our neighbor, even our worst enemy.

3. We are *redeemed* by the blood of Christ. We are bought with a great price. We must be very precious in God's sight.

St. Peter says: "You were redeemed from the vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, not with perishable things, with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18).

4. By the merits of Jesus Christ we are made children of God and temples of the Holy Ghost. Should we not love ourselves as such, if only to show reverence for God?

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1). "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

5. We are destined to live eternally with God and the angels in heaven. This dignity should impel us to love ourselves aright.

The end of man is the glory of God and the salvation of his own soul. We must have care, love, of ourselves, in order to save ourselves for God. For this reason, we should even love ourselves more than others: we have a greater duty to ourselves than to others. This should not be interpreted, however, as meaning that we should not sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others; for, as we shall see, self-sacrifice is not only possible, but most desirable.

In what consists true love of self?—True love of self consists in avoiding sin and practicing virtue.

"Enter by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter that way. How narrow the gate and close the way that leads to life! And few there are who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

1. We must first assure our *eternal salvation,* before we attend to earthly things which are but means to our last end.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you besides" (Matt. 6:33).

2. We should care more for *our soul* than for the ease of our body. If we lose our soul, we lose everything.

We should provide for our *bodily needs,* such as food, clothing, etc., but without excessive solicitude. They are only means by which we may ascend to God. "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is needful" (Luke 10:41-42).

3. It is against *true love of self* to strive only after earthly possessions and honors and neglect eternal salvation. "Take heed not to practice your good before men, in order to be seen by them; otherwise you shall have no reward with your Father in heaven" (Matt. 6:1). *"For what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?"* (Matt. 16:26).

Earthly riches and honors are *not good in themselves,* but are good only as a means for attaining eternal happiness. They are not to be used to gratify our senses, our pride, arrogance, conceit, or vanity, but only to help us go closer to God.

Does love of self include love of the body? — Love of self includes love of the body, for our body is a gift of God, that we should treat as such.

1. Our body is united with our soul, and is the *soul's instrument* for good, for the attainment of our end, eternal happiness.

God did not create us as disembodied souls; it is His will that we work out our salvation in this world, our souls inhabiting our body. As the instrument of the soul, the body must not be misused: "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body. . . . And do not yield your members to sin as weapons of iniquity, but present your members as weapons of justice for God" (Rom. 6:12-13).

2. We should have the greatest *respect and reverence* for our body. We should never defile it by sin, for it is destined to live forever in heaven.

We should guard our eyes, ears, tongue, and hands carefully, because sin enters the soul by the five senses. Our body is the *temple of the Holy Ghost.* It is like a monstrance holding God. St. Peter spoke of his body as a "tabernacle".

Some people are very particular about keeping their body clean. They frequently soap and wash their hands, and disinfect them after touching dirty things. But they are not so careful about avoiding sins that make their body so dirty that no disinfectant can purify it.

3. We do not love our body when we *indulge* it in vanity, or too much comfort, or by gratifying its every passion. By such indulgence we rather hate our body, because we bring upon it eternal punishment.

The saints mortified their bodies. That is how they understood the words of Our Lord: "For he who would save his life will lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake and for the Gospel's sake will save it" (Mark 8:35).

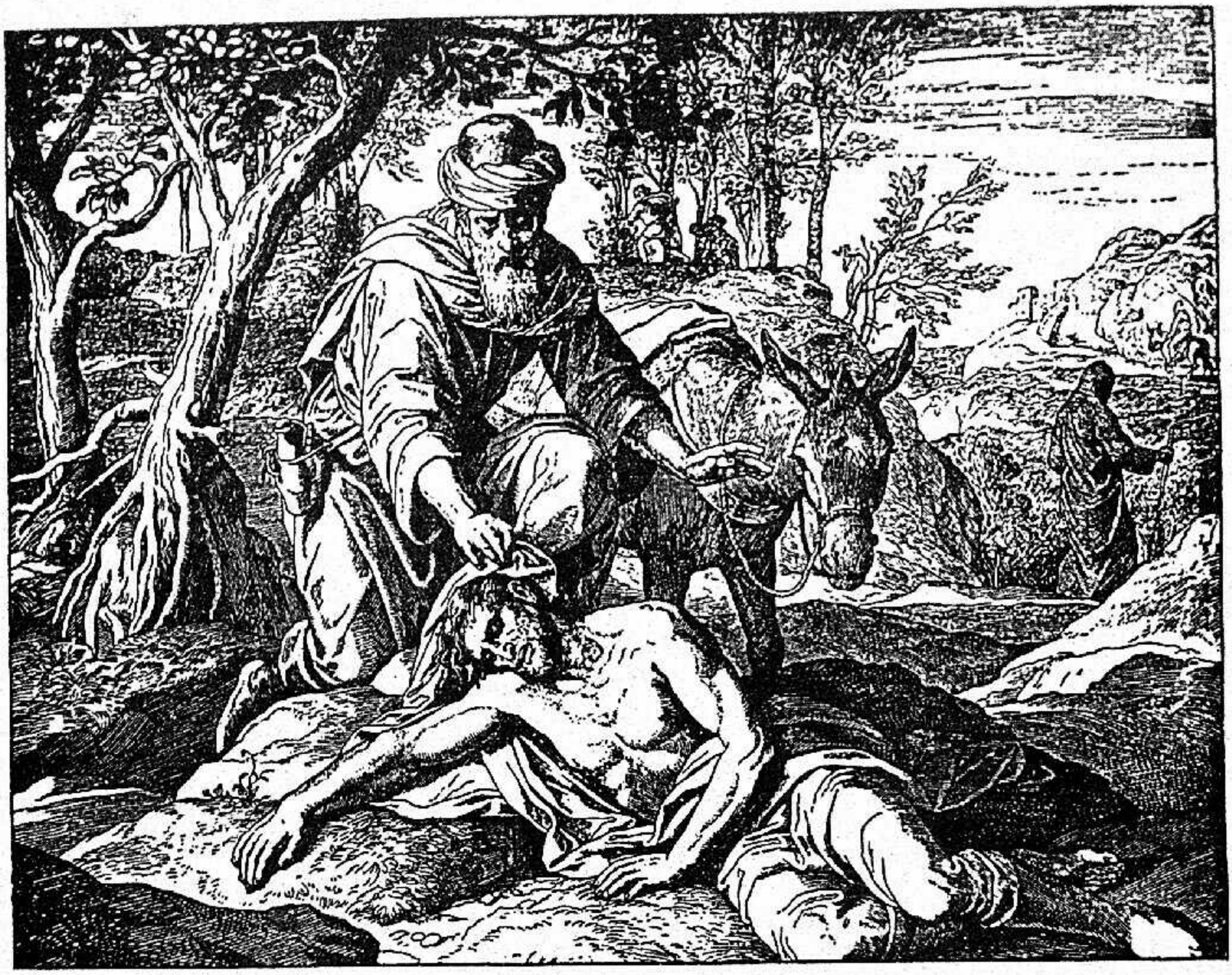
Does true love of self also include care for one's reputation and temporal goods? —True love of self also ordinarily includes care for one's reputation and temporal goods.

1. A good reputation is a precious possession, useful for both time and eternity. By a good reputation one can do much good; being well-thought of, he can be of influence over others, as well as more encouraged by himself to lead an upright life.

Our Lord Himself said: "So let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). And the Apostle reiterates the same advice when he said, "Let your moderation be known to all men" (Phil. 4:5).

2. Temporal goods are useful as a means for obtaining spiritual riches. By them we can help the needy, promote religion, gain ascendancy for the common good.

As with our body and our reputation, we should use riches only for the glory of God and the welfare of ourselves and our fellowmen. When put to the right use, all these make us truly rich in the eyes of God. Then we shall have no fear at death, when God says to us, "Make an accounting of your stewardship (of all these gifts)" (Luke 16:2).



All human beings without distinctions of race, nationality, religion, riches, sex, age, or occupation are our "neighbor". Even enemies are our "neighbor"; only devils and souls in hell are not.

Christ Himself taught us the love of our neighbor in the parable of the Good Samaritan, who took care of a stranger that had been robbed and left half dead by the wayside (Luke 10:29). *"There is neither Jew nor Greek. . . . For you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal. 3:28).

87. Love of Our Neighbor

Why must we love our neighbor?—We must love our neighbor because:

1. God commands it. *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"* (Matt. 22:39). The love of our neighbor for the love of God, is strictly enjoined upon us. This is why Holy Scripture speaks of only *one* commandment of charity.

God looks upon acts of mercy towards others as acts of love towards Himself. "For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in. . . . Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me" (Matt. 25:35, 40). "If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20).

2. Our neighbor is a child of God, made after God's image. God loves him so much that He died to redeem him.

God loves our neighbor *as He loves us.* God is preparing for him a place in heaven. If we love God, we shall love those whom He loves. "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why then doth every one of us despise his brother?" (Mal. 2:10).

3. Our neighbor is *our brother.* All human beings are descended from Adam and Eve. Our neighbor is our own brother, belonging to *the same human family,* destined for the same place of eternal happiness, heaven. Only devils and those in hell are excluded from our love.

We should be more especially united to Christians, because they are, like us, members of Christ's body, the Church. Our Lord said: "By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

How should we love our neighbor?—We should love our neighbor as ourselves, for God's sake.

1. To love our neighbor ***as ourselves*** means to have for him *the same kind,* although *not the same degree* of love that we have for ourselves. Jesus gave us the Golden Rule: *"Even as you wish men to do to you, so also do you to them"* (Luke 6:31).

The best way of knowing how to treat our neighbor is to put ourselves in his place. However, we are not bound to deprive ourselves of what is necessary in order to help our neighbor. In this case, the assistance we extend to him is not of obligation, but of *counsel;* this is the charity of the saints, the charity of Jesus Christ Himself, Who gave up His life that men may live: "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

2. It is not enough, in order to practice love of neighbor, to feel kind and affectionate towards him; our love must be *practical,* aimed at doing our neighbor good spiritually as well as materially.

"Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). And St. James said, "If a brother or a sister be naked, and in want of daily food, and one of you say to them, 'Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled', yet you do not give them what is necessary for the body, what shall it profit?" (Jas. 2:15-16).

3. To love our neighbor for God's sake means to love him in order to *please God.* This supernatural love is called ***charity.*** If we love a person because we expect from him some favor or advantage in return, we love him for our own sake. Our love is *interested;* it is not real love.

Our Lord says: "If you love those who love you, what merit have you? For even sinners love those who love them" (Luke 6:32). "But when thou givest alms, do not let thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing, so that thy alms may be given in secret; and thy Father, who sees in secret, will reward thee" (Matt. 6:3-4).

If we love a person because he is attractive or kind, without any reference to God, we love him only for his own sake, and not for God's. This is *natural affection.*

4. True love of God makes us love even *disagreeable people,* without reference to their love for us. It makes us love the poor, the sick, the unfortunate, the suffering, the repulsive, and even our enemies, just because God loves them, and wishes us to love them. Thus Christians of all ages have sacrificed themselves for charity.

St. Peter Claver, the "Apostle of the Negroes", in Colombia, South America, became a slave of slaves for Christ's sake. In the Philippines, Priests and Sisters are laboring in the Culion leper colony, in constant danger of exposure to the disease. Others take care of other charitable institutions, with no hope of earthly reward, all *for God's love.*

Should we give the same degree of love to all men?—No, we may, and should, love some more than others.

1. We should love our parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, friends, and benefactors best.

Husbands and wives must be devoted to each other. Parents must sacrifice themselves for their children. We must love our country and countrymen in a special manner, because God gave them to us, but we must never hate or dislike people of other nationalities.

2. We must exercise great care in choosing our *companions.* We should not be intimate with more than a trusted few.

We should be kind to all, but not intimate with all. One rotten apple in a basket will rot all the rest in a short time; so an evil companion easily corrupts his associates.

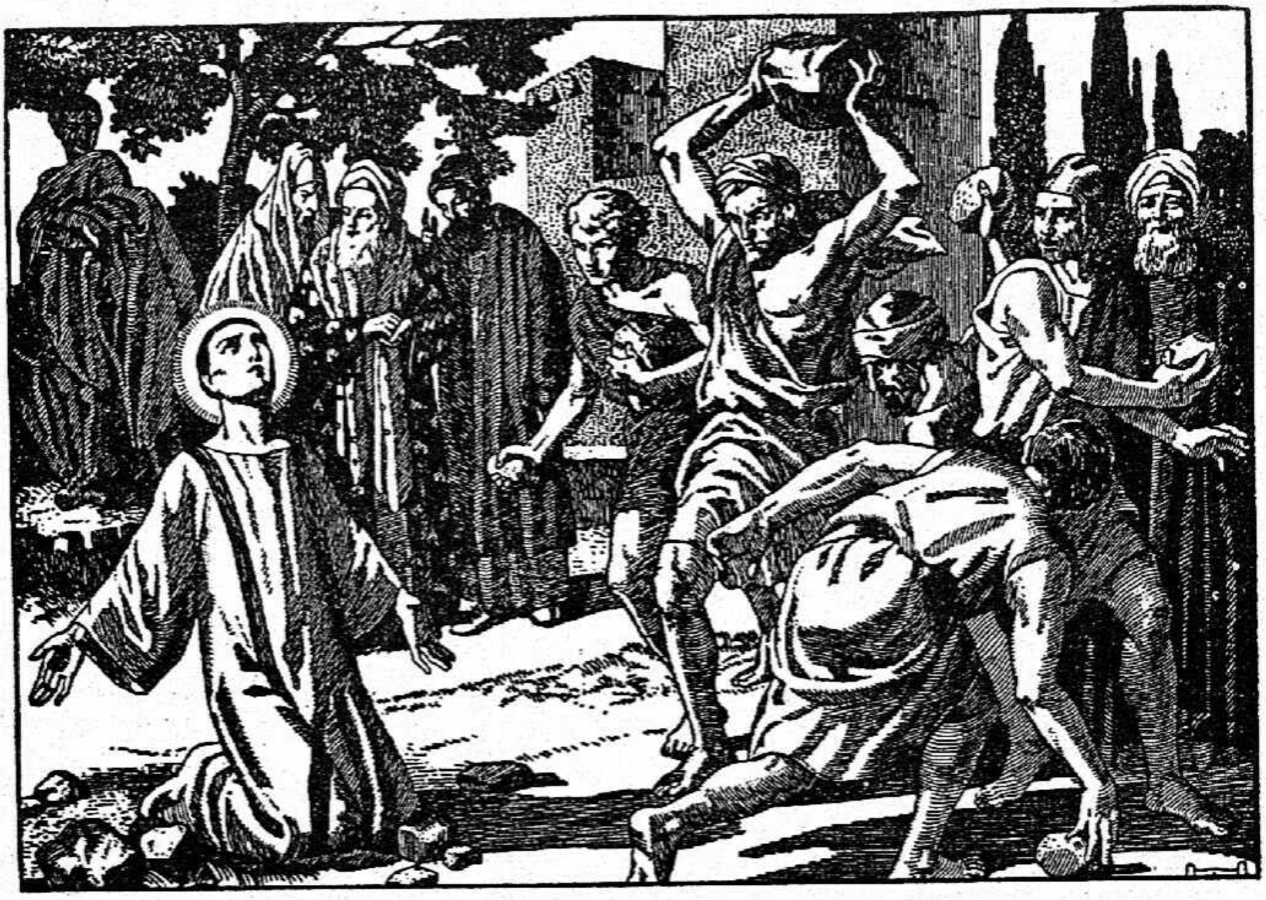
What is the reward of those who unfailingly practice the precept of love of neighbor?—Those who unfailingly practice the precept of love of neighbor bring down blessings upon earth, and will obtain heaven as their eternal reward.

1. Our Lord called the precept of charity towards our neighbor a *new commandment:* "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another: that as I have loved you, you also love one another" (John 13:34).

This is because before Christ's coming, people did not understand the precept of charity in the same sense that Our Lord gives it. If today men would closely fulfill that precept, what blessings would ensue! No one would wrong his fellowmen; there would be no need of prisons; there would be no extreme poverty; and peace would reign.

2. Love is the fulfilling of the law; and so one who loves his neighbor for the love of God is rewarded with heaven.

One who is good to his fellowmen cannot be a wicked sinner. He who practises charity has other virtues. Love cannot exist alone in the human heart, as the heart cannot exist without other organs.



Our enemies are those who hate us and seek to do us harm. Before he was converted and became the Apostle Paul, Saul was an enemy of the Christians; he persecuted them. But he who loves his enemy is like the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen, who gave us a striking example of love for enemies. When his enemies were stoning him to death, instead of wishing them ill, he prayed: "Lord, do not lay this sin against them" (Acts 7:60). He was called "a man full of the Holy Spirit".

88. Our Enemies and Our Friends

Why must we love our enemies?—We must love our enemies because:

1. Christ commands it. Christ says: *"Love your enemies,* do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. 5:44). "If you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you" (Mark 11:26).

We must love our enemies for the same reasons and in the same manner we love our neighbor; for enemies as well as friends are our neighbors.

2. Christ has given us the supreme *example.* Our heavenly Father Himself gives us the example, for He makes the sun to shine on the just and the unjust alike. From the cross Our Lord prayed for His *enemies:* "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He who loves his enemy for God's sake is like God; he is like his Father in heaven (Matt. 5:45). He follows the example of Christ, who prayed and died for His enemies. He is like the saints, who have always loved their enemies, for the love of God. "For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do" (John 13:15). "He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

3. We ask God to forgive us. In the "Our Father" we say: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." *Thus we ask God to treat us as we treat our enemies.* If we do not forgive them, He will not forgive us.

"If you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses" (Matt. 6:15). Can anything be clearer than these words of our Lord?

How do we show love for our enemies?—We show love for our enemies in many ways:

1. We should not take *revenge* on them. When Our Lord was reviled, He did not revile. Vengeance belongs to God, not to us. "Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom. 12:19).

Once a Samaritan village would not receive Jesus because He was a Jew. The Apostles becoming angry wished to call down fire from heaven. But Our Lord rebuked them, saying: "You do not know of what manner of spirit you are" (Luke 9:55). "And to him that strikes thee on the one cheek, offer the other also" (Luke 6:29).

2. We should *return good for evil,* avenging ourselves in God's way, by doing good to those that hate us.

If we do good to our enemy instead of avenging ourselves, we put him to shame, and pacify him. "If thy enemy is hungry, give him food; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing, thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head" (Rom. 12:20). "We are reviled, and we bless; we are persecuted, and we bear with it" (1 Cor. 4:13).

"Peter asked, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to thee seven times, but seventy times seven'" (Matt. 18:21-22).

3. If anyone offends us and comes to ask our pardon, we must receive him kindly, and not be proud or unforgiving. If we offend any one, we should beg his pardon at once.

"Do not let the sun go down upon your anger" (Eph. 4:26). We are never sure of waking up again from sleep, so let us always be at peace in conscience by being at peace with all.

4. When we are seriously injured, as in our property, honor, or reputation, we are not forbidden to claim our just rights before *lawful authority.* Often justice requires us to do this, in order to prevent greater abuses.

Forgiveness of our enemy does not require *intimate association.* It is enough that we treat him *with civility,* and help him if he is in need.

5. Love of enemies is a duty of *nations,* as well as of individuals. Nations should never go to war, except as a last resort, to protect themselves and their just rights; war must never be from motives of revenge.

But cruelty in war is sinful. Soldiers must not treat brutally those who are disabled in battle, or attack non-combatants.

6. These are some practical ways of loving our enemies: to respect their rights; to avoid uncharitable thoughts and words about them; to show good manners towards them; to do them a good turn whenever possible.

We should be most careful not to form a habit of *faultfinding or backbiting,* however much we are provoked. "See that no one renders evil for evil to any man; but always strive after good towards one another and towards all men" (1 Thess. 5:15).

How should we love our friends?—We should love our friends loyally, and in the sight of God.

1. True friendship is always based on the love of God. If based on selfish or wrong motives, it is false friendship that results in ruin for those indulging in it.

One who hates God can never make a true and good friend. Relations based on pleasure or selfish gain, or some evil purpose, cannot be termed friendship. Such relations, unlike true friendship, disappear or turn bitter with the advent of misfortune.

2. For a model of true friendship we should take Our Lord's friendship for His apostles, and especially for His favorite apostles, John, Peter, and James. Other particular friends of Jesus were Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha.

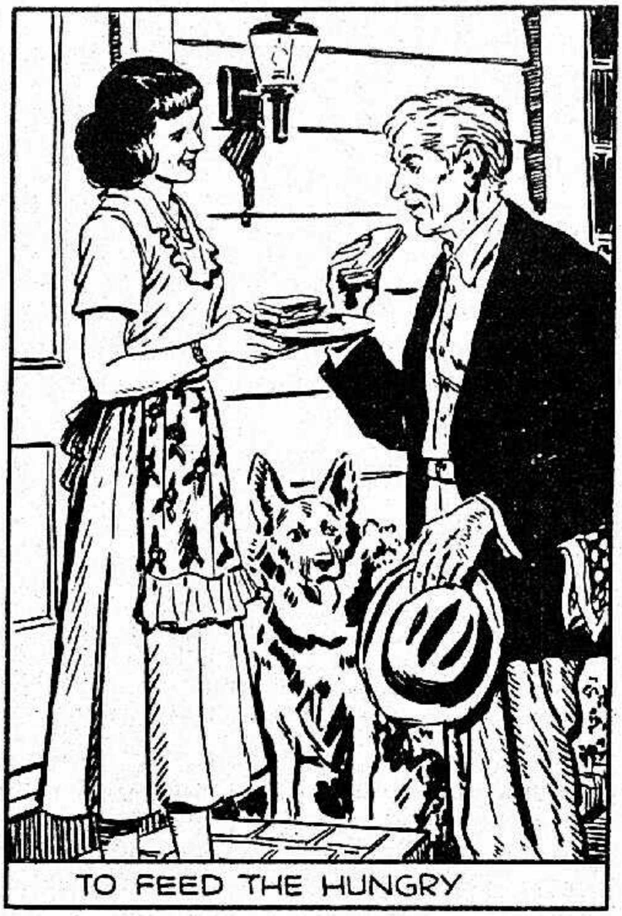
A sign of true friendship is the mutual support each gives to the other, the confidence each reposes in the other, the kindly correction each feels free to give the other. For example, Christ used to correct His dear friends, pointing out to them faults that needed correction for their betterment.

3. We should look upon our true friends as one of our most precious possessions. As Holy Scripture says: "Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend, and no weight of gold or silver is able to equal the goodness of his fidelity" (Ecclus. 6:15).

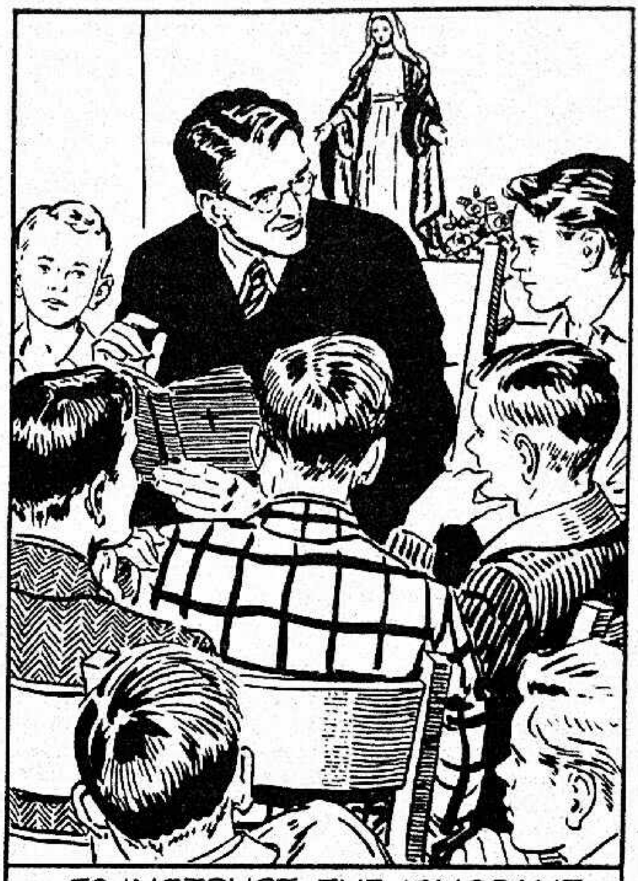
"Blessed is he that findeth a true friend" (Ecclus. 25:12). Such a friend adds to our happiness, and helps us in times of difficulties material and spiritual.

4. We must, however, be careful in the choice of friends, making sure that those with whom we form friendships will be good for us. It is not advisable to adopt friends rashly or too quickly, on the spur of the moment, because of some temporary attraction or sympathy.

How many people have been ruined on account of the company they have kept! We must never have as friends those who would destroy in us the friendship of God, by causing us to sin.



TO FEED THE HUNGRY



TO INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT

1. Giving alms to a beggar is a corporal work of mercy. God looks upon charity given to the poor as an act of charity to Himself. Jesus Christ Himself said this (Matt. 25:40).

2. When we teach catechism we are performing a spiritual work of mercy. Many can do this work today, if they only would. Numerous persons, even at an advanced age, do not know the essentials of their religion, for want of someone to teach them.

89. Works of Mercy

What must we do to love God, our neighbor, and ourselves?—To love God, our neighbor, and ourselves, we must keep the commandments of God and of the Church, and perform the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Spiritual works of mercy are those that relieve spiritual needs of our neighbor. Corporal works of mercy are those that relieve corporal or material needs of our neighbor. "Therefore all things whatever you would that men should do to you, even so do you also to them" (Matt. 7:12).

Which are the chief corporal works of mercy?—The chief corporal works of mercy are seven:

1. To feed the hungry.—We must never turn away anyone who is hungry. Those in authority should prevent unemployment. Giving work is the best means for removing the necessity of feeding the unemployed.

St. Louis of France provided daily food to the poor, and often served them himself. Many charitable people today, especially the religious institutions, feed the hungry. Lay people can help out best by giving work to all they can afford to help; work is better for the able-bodied than direct alms-giving.

2. To give drink to the thirsty.

Our Lord says that a cup of cold water given *in His name* shall not go unrewarded (Mark 9:40). Giving medicine belongs to this work of mercy. Those who construct reservoirs, or who purify public drinking water, are giving drink to the thirsty.

3. To clothe the naked.—Many make a practice of giving clothes to the poor; other gifts belong to this kind of alms.

The story of St. Martin, giving half his cloak to a beggar, exemplifies this work of mercy.

4. To visit the imprisoned.—Those who visit the prisoners in jails and give them instruction and material help are doing a work of mercy.

In the Middle Ages the Order of Ransom was founded for the ransom of Christians held captive by the Turks. It is said that more than a million Christians were thus ransomed, either with money, or by others taking their place. In the 19th century Cardinal Lavigerie established the Order of the White Fathers, aimed at freeing slaves in Africa.

5. To shelter the homeless.—Those who do this work of mercy are like the Good Samaritan. Those who provide clean and comfortable homes for the poor at low rates of rent practice this work of mercy.

St. Paul said, "Hospitality do not forget; for by this some, not being aware of it, have entertained angels" (Heb. 13:2). In olden times travelers stopped for the night or for food in the monasteries. In the Alps, the monks of St. Bernard perform this work of mercy when they rescue, with the aid of their famous breed of dogs, travelers who have met with accidents.

6. To visit the sick.—When we visit the sick in order to give them temporal or spiritual relief, we do an act of mercy.

To build, support, or aid a *hospital* or a *patronage* for the sick is a most meritorious act of charity. Doctors and nurses who perform their duties to please God will be rewarded in heaven. Several religious orders have been founded for the express purpose of taking care of the sick, such as the orders founded by Sts. John of God and Vincent de Paul.

7. To bury the dead. — To attend a funeral, visit a house of mourning, or aid the bereaved family, are works of merit.

Other corporal works of mercy are: helping out during a fire or accident, rescuing one in danger of death, etc. Every word or act done in the name of or for the sake of Christ is a work of mercy, and will be rewarded.

Which are the chief spiritual works of mercy?—The chief spiritual works of mercy are seven:

1. To admonish the sinner.—Whenever we think our words may have a good effect, we should not hesitate to admonish the erring prudently. Those *in authority*, such as parents and teachers, are bound to admonish those under them of their faults, even if in doing so they bring trouble upon themselves. Good example is another way of admonition.

In admonishing sinners, we must do so with gentleness and charity. Otherwise we might only produce results the opposite of what we wish. It would be wrong, if with a little trouble we could save a sinner from sin, did we not speak to save him; it would, moreover, be a loss of great grace for ourselves. "He who causes a sinner to be brought back from his misguided way, will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:20).

2. To instruct the ignorant.

Missionaries, catechists, confessors, Christian writers and teachers—*all who teach* religion or other useful knowledge—are doing an important work of mercy, and will receive a reward. "They that instruct many unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity" (Dan. 12:3). Those who collect money for foreign missions do this work of mercy.

3. To counsel the doubtful.—We should be most zealous in helping those whom a word may save or aid. How happy we should be if the word we say helps a doubtful one to become firm in his faith!

As in admonishing sinners, advising the doubtful should be done prudently and gently, to effect good results. It is seldom effective to rush into heated argument. Let us pray first, before giving counsel.

4. To comfort the sorrowful.—We can comfort the afflicted by showing them sincere *sympathy*, by suggesting consolations, and by helping them in their need.

To comfort the sorrowful is a work of mercy similar to curing the sick, since grief is a mental and emotional ailment. To give comfort, we may speak of God's providence, of His love for every single one of His creatures, of the happiness He reserves for us in heaven, when all earthly sorrows and troubles will be ended.

5. To bear wrongs patiently.

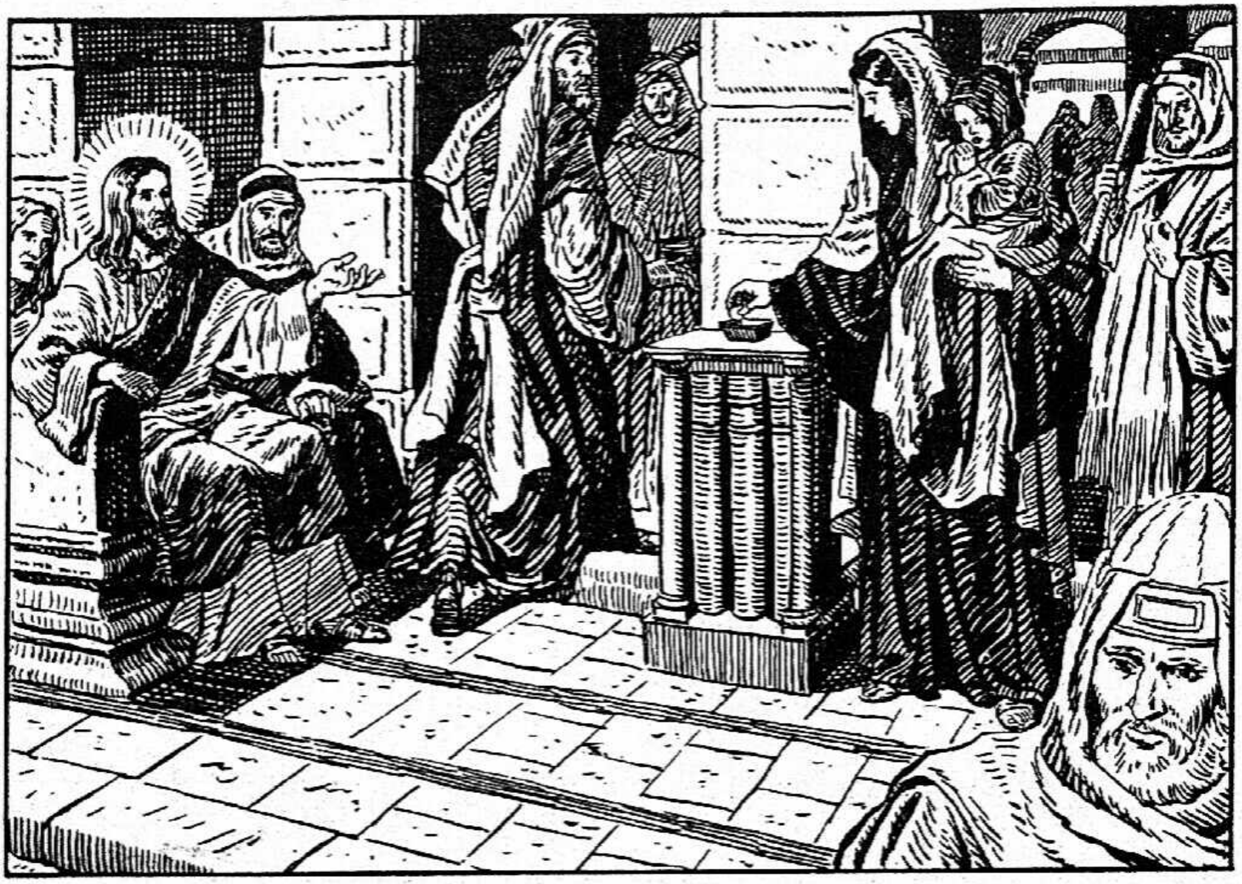
By being patient *with injustice*, we benefit both ourselves and our fellow-man. Our patience helps him realize his wrong-doing. It is, however, wrong to permit others to falsely lay a serious crime to our charge. But let us be patient, for love of God.

6. To forgive all injuries.

We must not seek *revenge*. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). We must forgive others, as we hope God will forgive us. Instead of seeking revenge, those who wish to imitate the saints go out of their way to do favors to those who injure them. Like Christ, they love all men.

7. To pray for the living and the dead.

We may not see the effects of our prayers, but God sees. Not one single prayer raised to God from a sincere heart is wasted. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Prayers do good not only to those we pray for, but to *ourselves.*



"Take heed not to practise your good before men, in order to be seen by them; otherwise you shall have no reward with your Father in heaven" (Matt. 6:1). The widow's mite had more value in the eyes of God than the gold that the rich poured ostentatiously into the Temple's coffers. Everything done for the service of our neighbor may be considered almsgiving. Everything spent in good works is lent to God, Who will return it with interest: "Come, blessed of my Father . . . Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me. . . . As long as you did not do it for one of these least ones, you did not do it for me" (Matt. 25:34, 40, 45).

90. Obligation of Good Works

Is every one obliged to perform the works of mercy?—Every one is obliged to perform the works of mercy, according to his own ability and the need of his neighbor.

By the works of mercy we put into practice the commandments of God completely, not merely avoiding sin, but doing good to others. Our obligation of good works varies with our condition in life and our vocation, as also with the degree of need of our neighbor. The obligation of a millionaire for the poor of his city is not the same as that of a wage-earner; neither is the duty of a bishop for good works the same as that of a layman.

1. It is a most serious obligation to give alms to the needy *according to one's means.* If material or corporal alms or works of mercy are not within our means, we can always give spiritual alms: prayers, etc. "Every tree therefore that is not bringing forth good fruit is to be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matt. 3:10). "Faith without works is useless" (Jas 2:20).

One who does no works of mercy fails to comply with the precept of love of neighbor. As St. Ambrose said to the stingy rich of his time: "The walls of your dwellings are hung with magnificent tapestry, while you strip the clothes off the poor man's back. A beggar is at your door pleading for a small alms; you do not even glance at him as you debate within yourself what kind of marble to use for the pavements of your palaces. The diamond you wear on your finger is sufficient to feed a multitude!"

2. He who performs the works of mercy in order to obtain the praise of others does

not practice virtue, for his intention is not of God. Even poor people can do works of mercy, because what counts before God is not the amount we give, but the good will with which we give what we can afford.

"If I distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, yet do not have charity, it profits me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3). This "charity" St. Paul speaks of is nothing but the pure love of God and neighbor; it excludes all vanity.

3. In doing the works of mercy, we should not be moved by the hope that we shall receive an earthly reward. Hence we should do good preferably to those who cannot repay us: "When thou givest a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; and blessed shalt thou be, because they have nothing to repay thee with; for thou shalt be repaid at the resurrection" (Luke 14:13).

"When thou givest alms, do not let thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing, so that thy alms may be given in secret, and thy Father, who sees in secret, will reward thee" (Matt. 6:3-4). This does not mean, however, that we should always keep our good works in secret, for Our Lord Himself advised, "So let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). If what we do will give good example, we should let it be known, but always with true modesty.

4. We ought to give material alms only to those really poor or unable to get work. It would be wrong to support people in idleness or vice; this would be to encourage them in sin. But if we have no means of finding out about the poor who beg our aid, it is much better to err on the side of charity than miserliness.

Quite a number of people give as an excuse for not giving alms the fact that many beggars are "fakes" who amass wealth by begging. It is, however, true, that such fakes cannot be of a considerable number, and that the people who most often excuse themselves do not give to anybody at all. Is not God generous to us? Let us imitate His example.

What are some practical ways of almsgiving?—Some practical ways of almsgiving are: to give help to our poor relatives, those in want, the Church, and charitable institutions.

1. In works of charity, we should give preference to our relatives, to our fellow Catholics, to our friends.

"Charity begins at home." It is not edifying to see well-known figures in public charities turn away a poor cousin who begs for some help to send his little child to school. This would very likely mean that the public charities done by such people are so done only for show, not from kindness of heart. As for fellow Catholics, St. Paul said: "Let us do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

2. The Church may be helped by giving alms to its missions, schools, orphan asylums, and homes for the poor.

Even *children* should be trained early to give alms by setting aside every week a small sum from their pocket-money. "By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

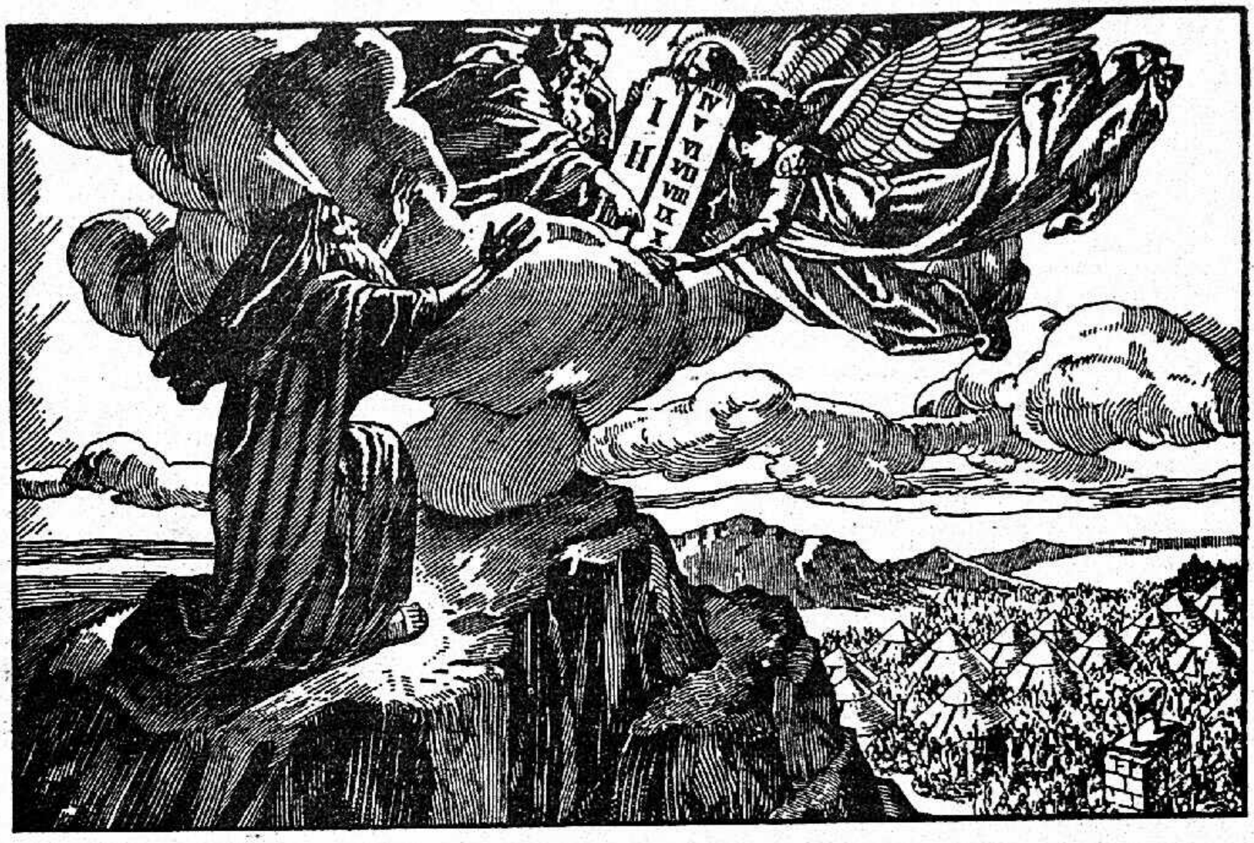
3. In these times, there are many organizations conducted by the government or by laymen to aid particular groups of the poor.

In contributing to such organizations, we should exercise prudent care. It has become the fashion to give alms to "institutions" instead of directly to the poor, to let these "institutions" distribute our charity for us; in other words, it is fashionable to give charity "by proxy". We should remember that personal charity is more kind than impersonal charity through institutions, that signing and mailing a check does not seem to be as Christian as visiting the poor in their dwellings, finding out what they really need, giving them comfort and aid directly. We should also, if we are too busy to do anything but "institutional charity", find out which are worthy of help. Some such institutions are top-heavy; that is, too much goes for officials' salaries.

Are all the ordinary deeds done every day to relieve the corporal or spiritual needs of others true works of mercy?—All the ordinary deeds done every day to relieve the corporal or spiritual needs of others are true works of mercy, if done in the name of Christ.

"And before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me; sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the just will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee; or thirsty, and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and take thee in; or naked, and clothe thee? Or when did we see thee sick, or in prison, and come to thee?' And answering, the king will say to them, 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me'" (Matt. 25:32-40).

If in all our works we remember and love God, we have the supernatural motive.



Moses spent forty days on Mount Sinai speaking with God. To him God gave two stone tablets on which were engraved the Ten Commandments. Thus we see why we must obey the Commandments, for God Himself gave them to us; they are God's laws, requiring strict obedience.

91. The Commandments of God

Which are the commandments of God? —The commandments of God are these ten:

1. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3. Remember thou keep holy the Lord's day.

4. Honor thy father and thy mother.

5. Thou shalt not kill.

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7. Thou shalt not steal.

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

By whom were the ten commandments given? — The ten commandments were given by Almighty God, Who first gave them to Moses on Mount Sinai.

1. In the third month after the Israelites had left Egypt, they arrived near Mount Sinai. God called *Moses* and told him He would appear to the people. On the third day there was thunder and lightning, and a trumpet sounded.

Moses took the Israelites to the foot of the mountain, which shook violently and smoked like a furnace. The trumpet blew louder. Then *God spoke* from the clouds. But the Israelites were afraid, and begged Moses to pray God not to speak to them.

2. Moses went up Mount Sinai to talk with God. God gave him two *tablets of stone,* on which were carved the ten commandments. On coming down from the mountain, Moses found the Israelites adoring a golden calf, made out of the gold from their jewelry. In his anger Moses threw

down the tablets of stone and broke them. Later, Moses again went up Mount Sinai. God told him to make two new tablets; on these Moses wrote the commandments.

The two tablets, which are called the *Tables of Law*, were later placed in the Ark of the Covenant, and the Ark was kept in the Tabernacle. When Solomon built the Temple, the Ark was placed in the innermost part, called the "Holy of Holies". Both Ark and Tables disappeared with the destruction of the Temple and fall of Jerusalem, 587 B. C.

In the enumeration of the commandments of God to be found in the Books of Moses, are the commandments definitely divided into ten?—In the enumeration of the commandments of God to be found in the Books of Moses, although the injunctions are distinctly tenfold, there is no definite numerical division.

1. The Catholic enumeration of the ten commandments *differs* from the English (and Calvinist) Protestant enumeration. The Catholic division was in use in England till the Protestant revolt; it is still used by most Lutheran churches.

The Catholic system is based on the Hebrew text, and principally on the enumeration made by St. Augustine; it was adopted by the Council of Trent. By it, the first commandment contains everything relating to false worship and false gods. The tenfold division is safeguarded by dividing the last precept regarding desire into one relating to sins of the flesh, and another referring to sins against property, just as *acts* against purity are forbidden separately from *acts* against property.

The English Protestant enumeration is based on Origen and others. By it the worship of graven images is numbered as the Second Commandment, and all the succeeding commandments thereby are advanced one over the Catholic enumeration. To safeguard the tenfold division, the last two commandments are grouped together as the Tenth.

2. The ten commandments are arranged in logical order to embrace *all laws necessary* for the enforcement of the two precepts of charity, the two great commandments of love of God and love of neighbor. The first three commandments comprise our duty towards God. The first commandment requires adoration and loyalty; the second requires reverence; the third requires formal service, the sanctification of a day for the exclusive honor of God.

The last seven commandments comprise our duty to ourselves and our fellowmen. The fourth commandment contains our duties towards our parents and superiors, as representatives of God. Conversely, the commandment also contains the duties of superiors towards their subordinates. The fifth commandment assures the protection of life; the sixth, of purity; the seventh, of property; the eighth, of reputation and honor; and the ninth and tenth of domestic life.

Are we obliged to obey the commandments of God?—We are strictly obliged to obey the commandments of God.

1. God has imprinted the substance of the ten commandments in the human heart and mind, and they have therefore binding force. Even if they had never been revealed, we should still be *obliged to keep them*, for they are dictated by reason, and taught by natural law. The revealed law merely repeats and amplifies natural law.

While it is true that reason does not tell us to sanctify Saturday or Sunday, it certainly requires us to keep some day or days holy, to give exclusive honor to our Creator.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ *confirmed* the ten commandments and laid them upon us in more complete form.

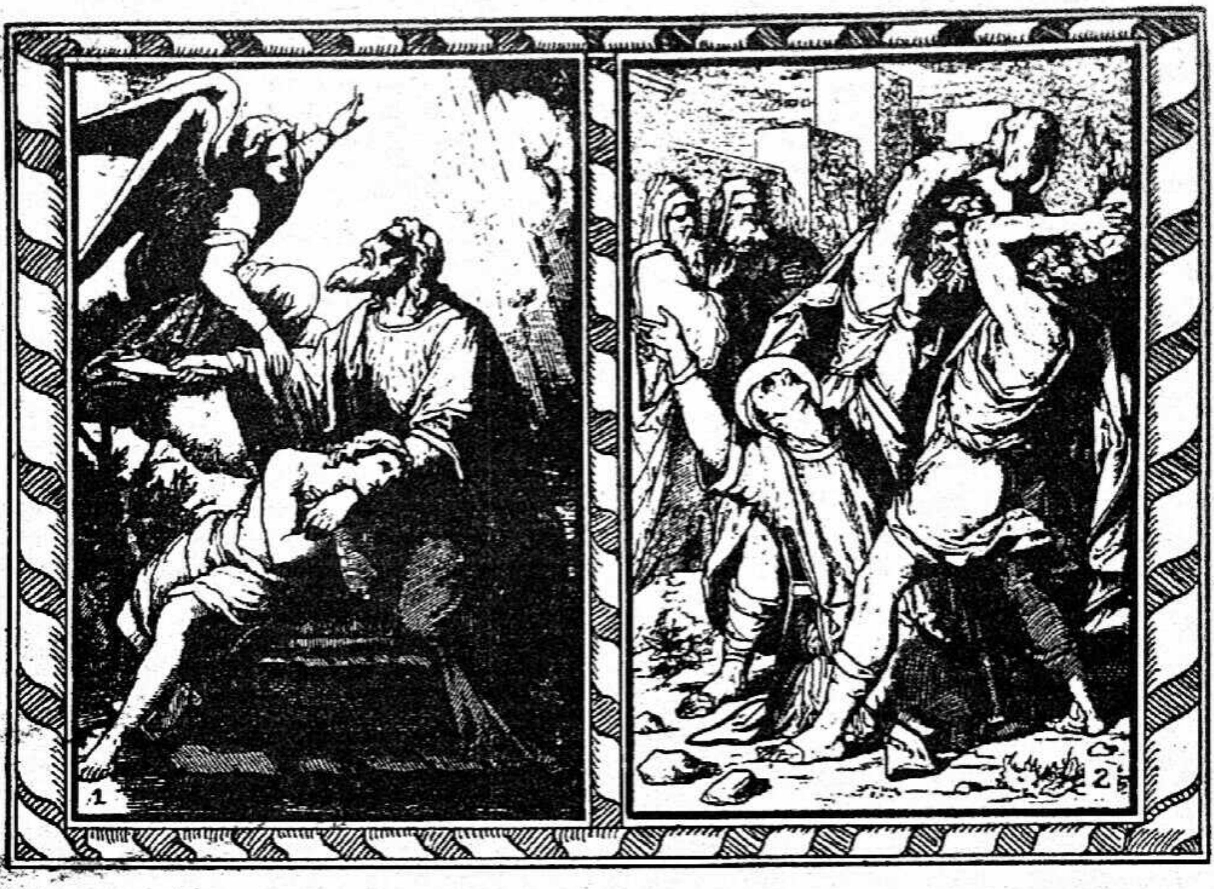
Christ reiterated the ten commandments when speaking to the rich young man (Matt. 19:18), and in the sermon on the mount. On various occasions He explained several of them separately. "I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall be lost from the Law, till all things have been accomplished" (Matt. 5:18-19).

3. We should gladly keep the Commandments, because God *wishes* and *orders* us to do so. It is the way to serve Him. If we keep the Commandments, we show by our acts that we *love* God, and so serve Him.

Violation of the commandments results in temporal punishments like discontent, dishonor, bad health, and other miseries. Those obedient to God's commandments always enjoy peace of conscience in this life, and in the next their heavenly reward will be great, without limit and without end.

Should we be satisfied merely to keep the commandments of God?—We should not be satisfied merely to keep the commandments of God, but should always be ready to do good deeds, even when they are not commanded.

If we truly love our parents and friends, we do not wait to be commanded to do what will please them. God is our best Friend; if we really love Him, we would do what we know He likes, without being ordered to do so by His commandments. We would do little extra things, good works, sacrifices, all as an *offering of love* for Him.



In order to try Abraham's faith, God ordered him to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. In perfect obedience Abraham was on the point of sacrificing Isaac (1), when an angel appeared and stopped him, saying that God was satisfied with his obedience.

St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, is an excellent example of charity (2). He prayed for his enemies while they were stoning him to death.

92. The First Commandment

"I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."

What are we commanded by the first commandment? – By the first commandment we are commanded to offer to God alone the supreme worship that is due Him.

1. The first commandment requires us to worship and adore *God*, and God alone. We must render God exclusive adoration. He alone is the creator and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. We worship and adore Jesus Christ, because He is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God even as the Father and the Holy Ghost. This commandment forbids idolatry, false worship.

"It is written, the Lord thy God shalt thou worship, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10). We adore God because He is infinitely exalted above us, and we are entirely dependent on Him as our Creator and our Father.

2. Exterior as well as interior worship is *due* to God, because our bodies, as well as our souls, belong to Him. Very often exterior acts serve to arouse and increase interior devotion.

Our worship is *interior* when we adore God by inward acts of the heart and mind, such as acts of faith and love, without visible manifestations. Our worship is *exterior* when we accompany our interior worship by outward acts, such as vocal prayers and genuflections.

Without interior worship or devotion, external manifestations are worthless. "Hypocrites, well did Isaias prophesy of you, saying: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:7-8).

3. We should render *particular worship* to God upon arising and retiring, on entering a church, during religious services, and when receiving the sacraments.

However, it should be our aim to worship God every moment of our lives, by consecrating ourselves and our intentions all to Him each day. Even while working, we should once in a while pause to give a thought of love to God, and *offer ourselves* to Him.

4. Adoration of God includes *public worship,* that is, worship in which a number of persons participate. From the earliest times, God has given commands about public worship to be rendered to Him. Public worship edifies and gives *good example* to the different participants, so that they are encouraged to greater love of God. In public worship, we show ourselves a united body openly manifesting by visible signs our adoration of God.

Public worship is rendered in Mass, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, processions, etc. Some signs of public worship are kneeling, genuflecting, making the sign of the cross, vocal and community prayers, singing of hymns, and sermons. A magnificent example of public worship is an international eucharistic congress.

5. We should honor and reverence creatures who reflect the perfections of God. Thus we venerate saints, and honor and love persons on earth; but *we do not adore* them.

How do we worship God?—We worship God by acts of the virtues of faith, hope, charity, and religion.

1. True piety and adoration of God do not include a *gloomy manner,* a melancholy expression, and a hard exterior. True piety is cheerful, full of joy. "Serve God in gladness" (Ps. 99:2).

They are mistaken who think that a forbidding demeanor, continual groaning and sighings, weeping, etc., are pleasing to God. They only serve to repel others. We should remember that of all creatures, God loves most an innocent child. We shall not be mistaken in practices if we imitate him.

2. In our devotions we should avoid all singularity and *exaggerations;* these only make piety ridiculous and subject it to contempt. All devotions of extraordinary character, such as praying with outspread or upraised arms, should be done in private.

Here follow some examples of singularity that, if done in public, may do harm rather than good, and cause our religion to be looked upon with contempt. In a crowded public restaurant it would be out of place to stand conspicuously, make the sign of the cross, and say grace. It would be ridiculous upon hearing the Angelus bell while walking on the street, to kneel down and pray there.

What does faith oblige us to do?—Faith obliges us:

1. To make efforts to *find out* what God has revealed. If one is ignorant of his religion, he must seek instruction. Parents are strictly forbidden to send their children to anti-Catholic schools.

It is *forbidden* to read, print, lend, give or sell, books or periodicals against faith or morals.

2. To *believe* firmly what God has revealed. We worship God by faith when we firmly believe all the truths God has revealed, because He has revealed them Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Once we are sure God has revealed something, we must believe it. Faith does not require us to believe anything contrary to reason. Even if we cannot understand what is revealed, like the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, we act according to reason in believing it, for our reason tells us God cannot err, lie, or deceive.

3. To *profess* our faith openly whenever necessary. We are obliged to do so *when* we are challenged to make profession of it, or when an omission to do so would harm our neighbor or bring religion into contempt, or when we are questioned by lawful authority. We must *never* deny our faith.

Our Lord says: "Therefore everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge him before my Father in heaven" (Matt. 10:32).

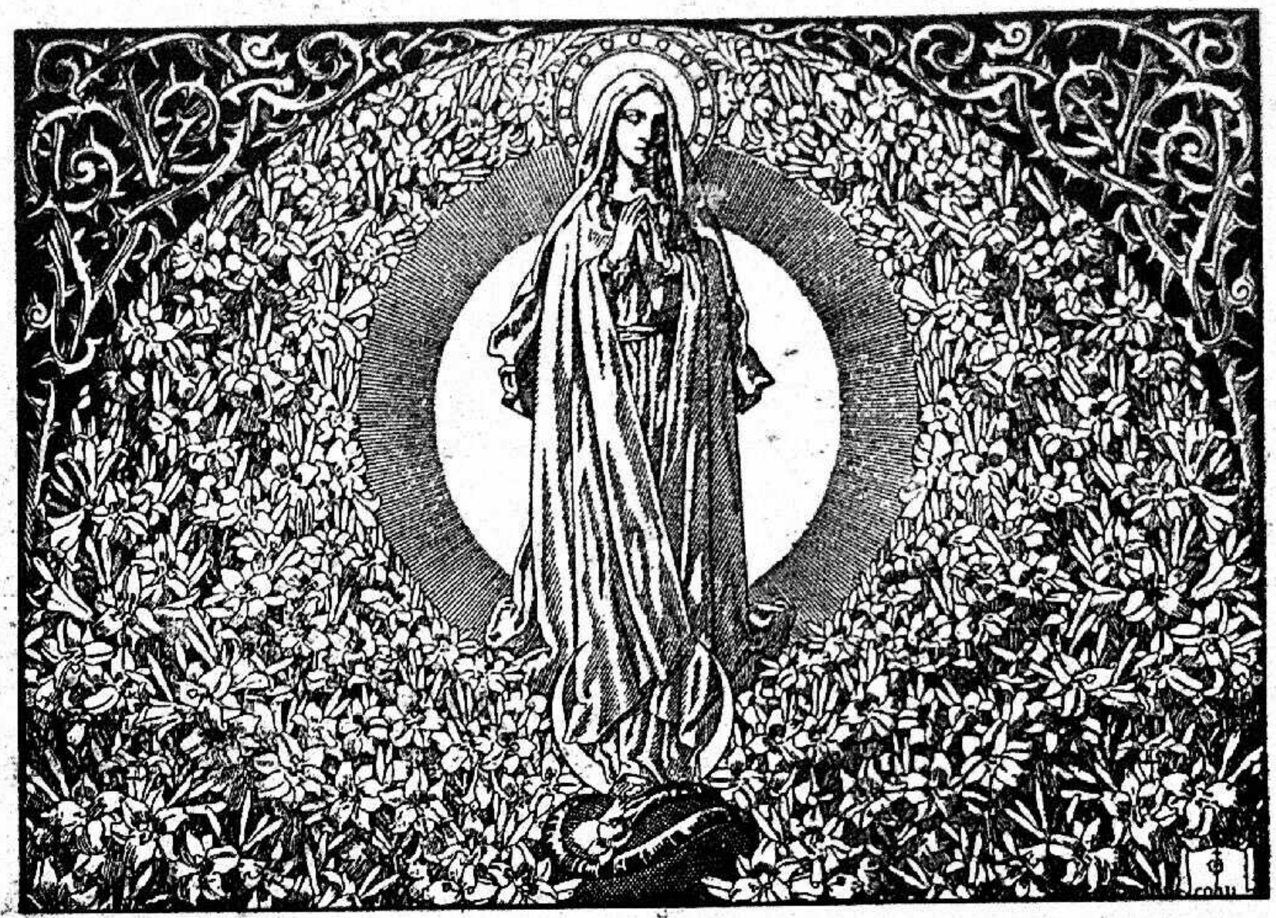
What does hope oblige us to do?—Hope obliges us to trust firmly that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it.

We worship God by hope when we firmly trust that God, Who is almighty and faithful to His promises, will help us attain eternal happiness. To Him we look for eternal salvation and the means to obtain it.

What does charity oblige us to do?—Charity obliges us to love God above all things because He is infinitely good, and to love our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

We worship God by charity when we love Him above all things for His own sake, and others as ourselves for love of Him. Charity is the pure and true *love* of God, which includes all virtues, and all the commandments.

What does religion oblige us to do?—Religion obliges us: to acknowledge God's infinite perfection, our complete dependence upon Him, our utter subjection to His will; and, to render Him due worship with all our faculties and acts of body, intellect, and will.



We pay special honor to the Blessed Virgin because she is the Mother of God, and our Mother. God has exalted her above all other creatures. Her intercession is more powerful with God than that of any other saint. No man refuses his mother a favor; so God does not refuse any request of Mary. Christ even worked his first miracle in advance of His time, because Mary asked Him. Let us all love and honor the Blessed Virgin, for she is our Mother, whom Christ Himself gave us from the cross.

93. Veneration of Saints

Does the first comandment forbid us to honor the saints in heaven?—The first commandment does not forbid us to honor the saints in heaven, provided we do not give them the honor that belongs to God alone.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and veneration of the saints, are not opposed to the commandment to adore God alone. We do not worship the saints; we only honor them as the special friends and servants of God. We adore God alone.

1. By venerating the saints we *honor God* Himself, Who is the cause of their holiness. Without the help of God, they would not have done anything holy. We do not adore saints. Should we not reverence those who reflect God's perfections? So we venerate the saints. Similarly we honor outstanding persons on earth; but we do not adore them.

We give to God the supreme honor and adoration, called *latria*. We render the saints our veneration, called *dulia*. To the Blessed Virgin we give special veneration, called *hyperdulia*, because she is above all angels and saints as the Mother of God. But even the Blessed Virgin we do not and cannot adore or worship. However saintly, not all the saints and angels together can approach the infinite holiness of God. We show honor to God when we venerate those to whom was granted grace to resemble Him.

2. Those who died in the grace of God, and who are already in heaven, and especially those whom the Church has canonized, are called Saints. Before ***beatification***, a very careful inquiry is made into the holiness of the person concerned.

The preliminary inquiry usually does not take place until at least fifty years after the person's death. Before beatification, two certain and unquestionable miracles must be worked at the intercession of the one whose cause is being considered. These miracles prove his being in heaven. One who is beatified is called *Blessed*. A limited public devotion to him is permitted.

3. ***Canonization*** is the solemn declaration that a person led a heroic life, is in heaven, and therefore may be publicly venerated by the whole Church. After canonization, a person is called *Saint*.

After beatification, two additional miracles must be worked at the intercession of the Blessed, before he can be canonized. Canonization is certainly not a demand for entrance into heaven. The Church merely declares that a person is already there. The holiness of the person's life is proved in the strict examination before beatification. The fact of his being in heaven is proved by the *miracles* worked at his intercession.

Why do we honor the saints in heaven?—We honor the saints in heaven because they practiced great virtue when they were on earth, and because in honoring those who are the chosen friends of God, we honor God Himself.

1. While still living on earth, the saints were of outstanding holiness in themselves, and did good to others for the love of God.

The cause for the beatification of someone does not take place unless such holiness is outstanding and ascertained by competent authority, or unless the miracles worked by the person proposed for beatification are of a most extraordinary character.

2. We venerate the saints because they are the chosen *friends of God,* in heaven.

If we are eager to show honor to earthly royalty, how much more should we honor the saints of God, princes of heaven! If we ask for prayers of our fellowmen on earth, how much more eager should we be to ask the saints, our friends in heaven!

How can we honor the saints?—We can honor the saints:

1. By imitating their holy lives. The highest honor we can pay them is to *imitate their virtues.*

The saints are models presented by the Church before our eyes so that we may know how to live according to the desires of God.

2. By praying to them. We honor them by praising them in word and song, and asking for their intercession.

We may pray *in private* to anyone who we believe is either in heaven or purgatory. But we are forbidden to give public veneration to anyone who is not beatified or canonized.

3. By showing respect to their relics and images.

We also give the saints honor when we celebrate their feasts, or take them as our patrons and models.

When we pray to the saints, what do we ask them to do?—When we pray to the saints we ask them to offer their prayers to God for us.

1. This is what we call the "intercession" of the saints. If we are grateful for the *intercession* of a friend before an earthly superior, how much more so should we be for the intercession of saints before God!

How many times have the saints obtained favors from God for men? And God likes this intercession: as He said, He would have spared Sodom for the sake of ten just men (Gen. 18:32).

2. Experience has proved that much is gained by invoking *certain saints* in times of special need. It appears that God has given to individual saints powers to help us in special needs.

Thus we invoke St. Joseph as the patron of a happy death; St. Anthony when we have lost anything; St. Blaise for diseases of the throat, etc. Many wonderful *answers to prayer* lead to the belief that the saints take particular interest in persons whose circumstances are the same as theirs were on earth.

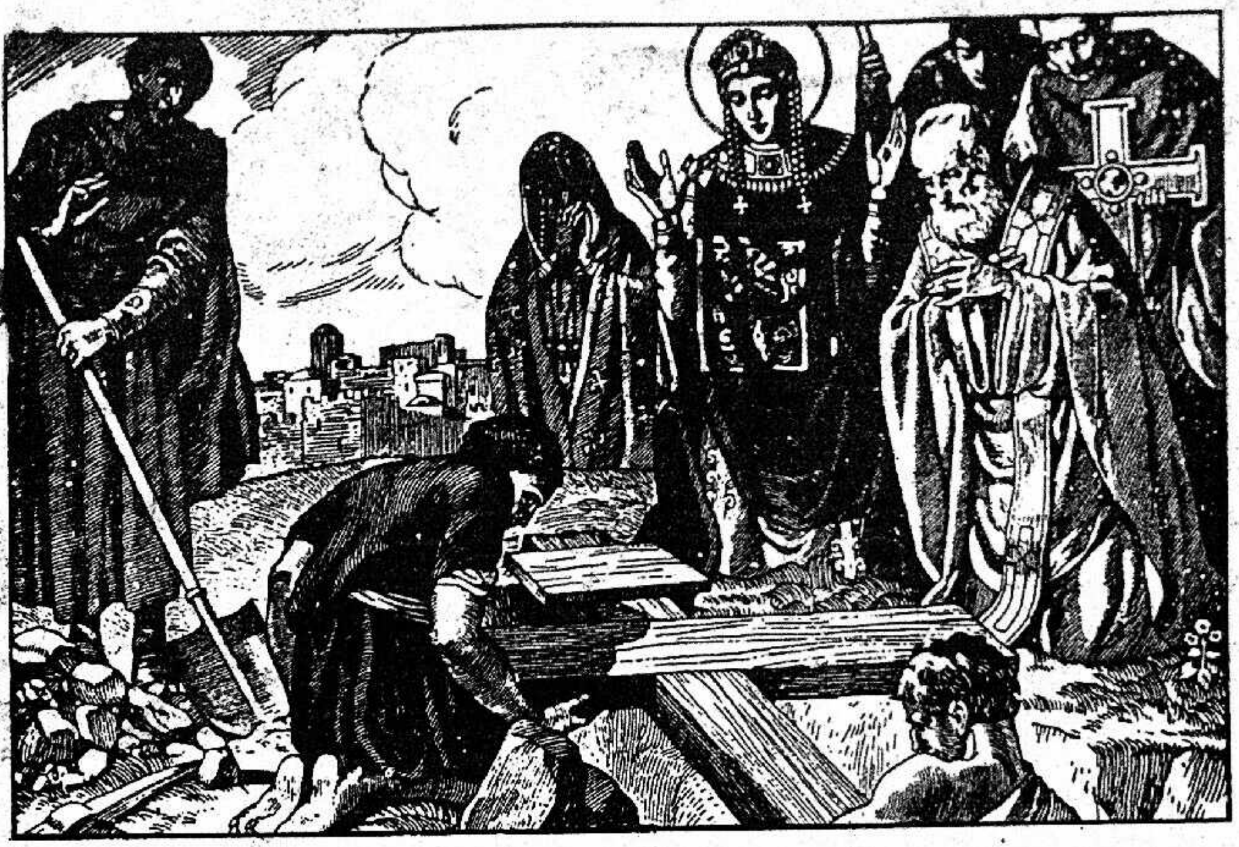
How do we know that the saints will pray for us?—We know that the saints will pray for us, because they are with God and have great love for us.

1. The saints in heaven are, with us, *members* of the Church, of one body belonging to Christ. "So we the many, are one body in Christ but severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:5).

Members of the same body give mutual help to each other; the saints help us by their prayers before God. On our part, we honor and imitate them.

2. The Church omits no opportunity to urge us to the *veneration* of saints. At Baptism we receive the name of a saint. Each day of the year one or more saints are commemorated. Images and pictures of the saints are placed in the churches. Saints are invoked in the Mass, the litanies, and other public prayers.

The Church *worships* God, and honors the saints as friends and servants of God. So churches and altars are dedicated and consecrated to *God alone* although named after saints and placed under their protection. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to *God alone*, although it may be celebrated in memory of the saints. In praying, we say to God, "Have mercy on us", but to the saints, "Pray for us", just as we would say it to a dear friend.



The true cross was found by St. Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine the Great in the year 326. Her workmen, digging on Mount Calvary in search of the true cross of Christ, found three crosses. Two of the crosses were applied without result to a very sick woman. As soon as the third cross touched her, she was instantly cured.

The feast of the finding of the true cross is kept on May 3. The adoration of the Cross on Good Friday is part of the Holy Week devotions. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is kept on September 14.

94. Relics and Images

Why do we honor relics? — We honor relics because they are the bodies of the saints, or objects connected with the saints or with Our Lord.

In a similar manner we preserve with reverence certain objects connected with our great men,—a sword, a coat, or books.

1. Remains of the bodies of saints, the Cross on which Our Lord died, the nails that crucified Him, are all *relics*. The clothes and furniture used by the saints are also held as relics.

Only those relics are *authentic* to which the name of the saint and the episcopal seal are attached; relics cannot be sold. God has often shown His approval of the use of relics by working miracles by means of them. "When it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life" (4 Kings 13:21).

2. Relics *deserve* to be venerated. The bodies of the saints were temples of the Holy Ghost, and instruments by which God worked.

They will some day rise glorious from the grave, and be united with the soul in heaven. God shows His approval of the veneration of relics by working frequent *miracles* at their application. In certain cases, the bodies of the saints have remained *incorrupt*, as those of St. Teresa, St. Francis Xavier, and St. Catherine of Bologna. The blood of St. Januarius, kept in a vial at Naples, liquefies several times a year for certain periods. "God worked more than the usual miracles by the hand of Paul; so that even handkerchiefs and aprons were carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them, and the evil spirits went out" (Acts 19:12).

3. We *honor relics* when we preserve them with reverence, visit the places where they are deposited, pray before them, etc.

Honor has been paid to relics from the earliest days of Christianity. When St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, was thrown to the lions, two of his companions came by night and gathered up his bones. When St. Polycarp was burned alive, the Christians collected his ashes for veneration. And so on.

4. Most *prized* of all relics are relics of the Passion, particularly of the Cross on which Christ died.

Some scoff at the relics of the cross, saying that there are too many to be genuine. But if all known pieces are put together, they would make a block only about 1/6 of a cubic foot. Today the twelve most famous portions of the true Cross range from 6.33 cubic inches to 33 cubic inches. The largest are to be found in Jerusalem, Brussels, Ghent, and Rome. Particles venerated are very small.

Is it right to show respect to the statues and pictures of Christ and of the saints?—It is right to show respect to the statues and pictures of Christ and of the saints, just as it is right to show respect to the images of those whom we love on earth.

We cherish photographs of our family and friends. We cherish and honor our National Flag, not because of the cloth out of which it is made, but because of what it represents. In a similar manner we respect sacred statues and pictures.

1. The honor we pay sacred images and pictures is *not idolatry,* because we do not adore them.

We honor sacred images in order to show our veneration for the persons they represent, not to adore them as gods. We make and use statues and pictures to remind us of Jesus Christ, Our Lady, and the saints. God Himself, after giving the First Commandment, ordered the making of statues to be placed in the Temple; and God cannot contradict Himself.

2. Some of the *benefits* we derive from the veneration of sacred images are:

(a) Through them effective, and sometimes supernatural, graces are obtained. There have been instances of miraculous pictures and statues, as well as crucifixes.

(b) They help us avoid distractions in praying, by fixing our attention.

(c) They serve as a silent admonition to encourage us to imitation.

(d) They are wonderful means for instructing the faithful in religion. The greatest artists in the world have been Catholic artists. Their greatest masterpieces treat of religious subjects. Even the most unlettered can understand a picture.

Do we honor Christ and the saints when we pray before the crucifix, relics, and sacred images?—We honor Christ and the saints when we pray before the crucifix, relics, and sacred images, because we honor the persons they represent; we adore Christ and venerate the saints.

Our actions should always conform to the faith implied by the pictures we display. We have those holy images for holy purposes, to venerate the saints for God's sake, and to imitate their holy lives.

1. We show *veneration* for sacred pictures and statues by placing them in our homes, in churches, and in schools. Jesus made a special promise to bless the house in which an image of *His Sacred Heart* is exposed.

We pray before them, adorn them with flowers, burn lights before them, and kiss them with reverence. We make visits and pilgrimages to the tombs or shrines of the saints. Similarly, on civil holidays, we show honor to our heroes by placing wreaths on their graves; we visit their homes, etc.

2. Above all other sacred representations, we venerate *the crucifix most.* It is the sign of our redemption. On the cross Our Lord died to save us from the consequences of sin.

Such is the honor the Church pays the crucifix that she allows no sacrament to be administred, no Mass to be celebrated, no act of worship to be performed, unless in the presence of a crucifix. We place the crucifix in the hands of the dying. It accompanies us to the grave. Every Christian home should have a crucifix prominently displayed.

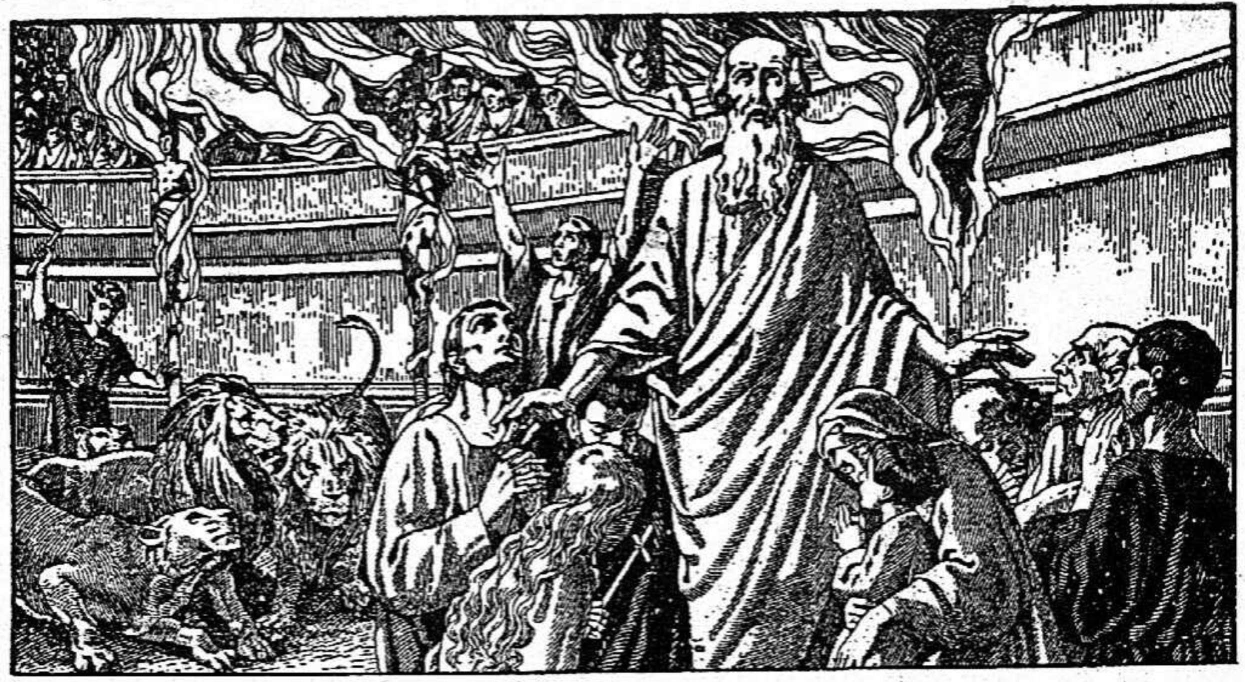
Do we pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints?—We do not pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics, but to the persons represented.

1. The veneration we pay to sacred images and relics is *not paid to the relic, picture, or statue* itself, but to the one represented, God, or one of the saints or angels.

In the same way when we kiss our mother's picture we do not give our affection to the paper, but to our mother. Disrespect to an image is disrespect to the one represented.

2. In venerating relics, sacred statues, and pictures, we do not believe that any *divine power* resides in them. They cannot, of themselves, work miracles. They are mere instruments, inanimate objects that may be used by an Almighty God.

The numerous miracles worked through the use of relics were a result, not of the relics' power, but of God's, acting through them. The Gospels tell the moving story of the woman cured by touching the hem of Our Lord's garment. Yet even that sacred garment did not by itself work the miracle; Christ used His power, working through the garment. And so today relics continue to play a part in the working of miracles, in the suspension of the natural law, but always as mere instruments of Almighty God.



If we love God, no sacrifice is too great to offer Him for His pleasure. Millions of martyrs have been glad to give their lives for their faith. During the great persecutions under the pagan Roman emperors, thousands were taken to the arena to be torn by wild beasts. Thousands of others were covered with pitch and lighted as torches. All kinds of human tortures were invented to make the Christians deny their faith. But their pure love of God caused them to be firm and to meet death gladly.

95. Sins Against Faith

How does a Catholic sin against faith?— A Catholic sins against faith by infidelity, apostasy, heresy, indifferentism, and by taking part in non-Catholic worship.

We may lose our faith by: (a) not learning well the doctrines of the Church; (b) wilfully doubting truths that have been revealed to the Church; (c) reading books and other literature against our religion; (d) attending assemblies of people who are opposed to our religion; and (e) neglecting the practice of our religion. (*See pages* 142-147.)

1. *Infidelity* is: (a) rejection of the Faith by one who has received it; or (b) neglect to look into the foundation for Church claims by one who understands the necessity for such investigation; or (c) ignorance of the Faith by one who has had no chance to learn it, or who does not realize the importance of learning.

Persons who do not believe in Christianity as a divinely revealed religion, whether they have been baptized or not, are commonly referred to as "***infidels***". Infidelity is refusal to believe in anything that cannot be perceived with the senses, or comprehended with the understanding.

But is it not utterly reasonable to have faith in an almighty God, Who knows much more than we can ever hope to know, and Who can do things beyond our understanding? It is necessary that we serve God in the way He requires, not in the way it pleases us to do so. For this reason we must practice the religion *revealed* by God, and avoid making up our own religions according to our whims and innumerable fancies. Buddhists, Mohammedans, Hindus, Jews, and pagans, are infidels. As explained, Christians can also become infidels.

2. *Apostasy* is complete rejection of the truths of the Catholic faith by one who has been baptized. A vicious and sinful life often leads to apostasy. No really good man has ever fallen away from the Catholic faith.

An ***apostate*** denies or gives up his religion through fear or shame, or through worldly motives or human respect, and denies Christ Himself. He is under sentence of eternal damnation, for Christ says: "Whoever disowns me before men, I in turn will disown him before my Father in heaven" (Matt. 10:33). It may happen that a Catholic gives up his religion because he had a quarrel with the priest. He crucifies Christ because of a petty disagreement with a mortal. Such a man should ever remember that "he who loses his goods loses much; he who loses his life, loses more; but he who loses his faith loses all."

3. *Heresy* is the refusal of baptized persons to accept one or more of the truths revealed by God and taught by the Catholic Church. If this refusal is voluntary and obstinate, there is formal heresy; if it is involuntary, there is material heresy.

A *heretic* claims to be Christian, but denies one or more truths revealed by God. Members of Protestant denominations are heretics. Much of their heresy, however, is negative, or material; that is, accompanied by no obstinacy of the will; for example, the heresy of a Protestant who has always believed his is the religion ordained by God.

4. *Indifferentism* teaches that all religions are equally good. It is the result of a lack of interest in religion. Many do not want to trouble themselves about studying their religion, and gradually lose faith.

A soul is like a plant: it needs to be watered continuously by the truths and practices of religion. Unless it is so nourished, it will sicken and perish. Why should Christ, and after Him the Apostles, and after them a long line of Catholics, have suffered so much and resisted persecution so firmly, if it were of no importance what a man believed? It is *absurd* to suppose that God does not care whether men denounce His Son as an impostor and blasphemer, or worship Him as God.

Why does a Catholic sin against faith by taking part in non-Catholic worship?—A Catholic sins against faith by taking part in non-Catholic worship, because he thus professes belief in a religion he knows is false.

1. It is wrong to be present at Protestant or Jewish *services* even when we do not participate in them, because such services are intended to honor God in a manner He does not wish to be honored in. If He instituted a Church of His own, He must wish to be honored in the ways of that Church. In addition, we then give bad example, and expose ourselves to the danger of losing our faith.

When necessary, for social obligations, a Catholic may be present at a non-Catholic *wedding or funeral*, but he must not participate in the services. In no case may he attend other services of non-Catholic churches, such as the installation of their ministers, sermons, etc.

2. It is a sin to belong to any society which is opposed to the Church. *Freemasonry*, or Masonry, is condemned by the Church. Many charitable persons, who have joined Masonry merely for social or business reasons, do not understand the stand of the Church. Most of them serve only the Third Degree, and hold no spirit of antagonism against the Church; but these good persons do not realize the basic purposes of their organization.

In actual fact, Freemasonry is a religious sect bent upon the destruction of the Catholic Church. It has its own doctrines, priesthood, and ritual; it has its own characteristic morality. For instance, it imposes an oath that requires blind obedience; it does not accept Divine Revelation. "By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruits of Freemasonry are evident throughout European history. May we say that no one need be ashamed of the fruits of the Catholic Church in all places and all times?

How can a Catholic best safeguard his faith?—A Catholic can best safeguard his faith by making frequent acts of faith, by praying for a strong faith, by studying his religion very earnestly, by living a good life, by good reading, by refusing to associate with the enemies of the Church, and by not reading books and papers opposed to the Church and her teaching.

1. *Acts* of faith are prayers said to tell God we believe in Him. Pleasing to God also are prayers of faith, such as the Apostles made to the Lord: "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). The more we believe, the firmer our faith becomes, by God's grace.

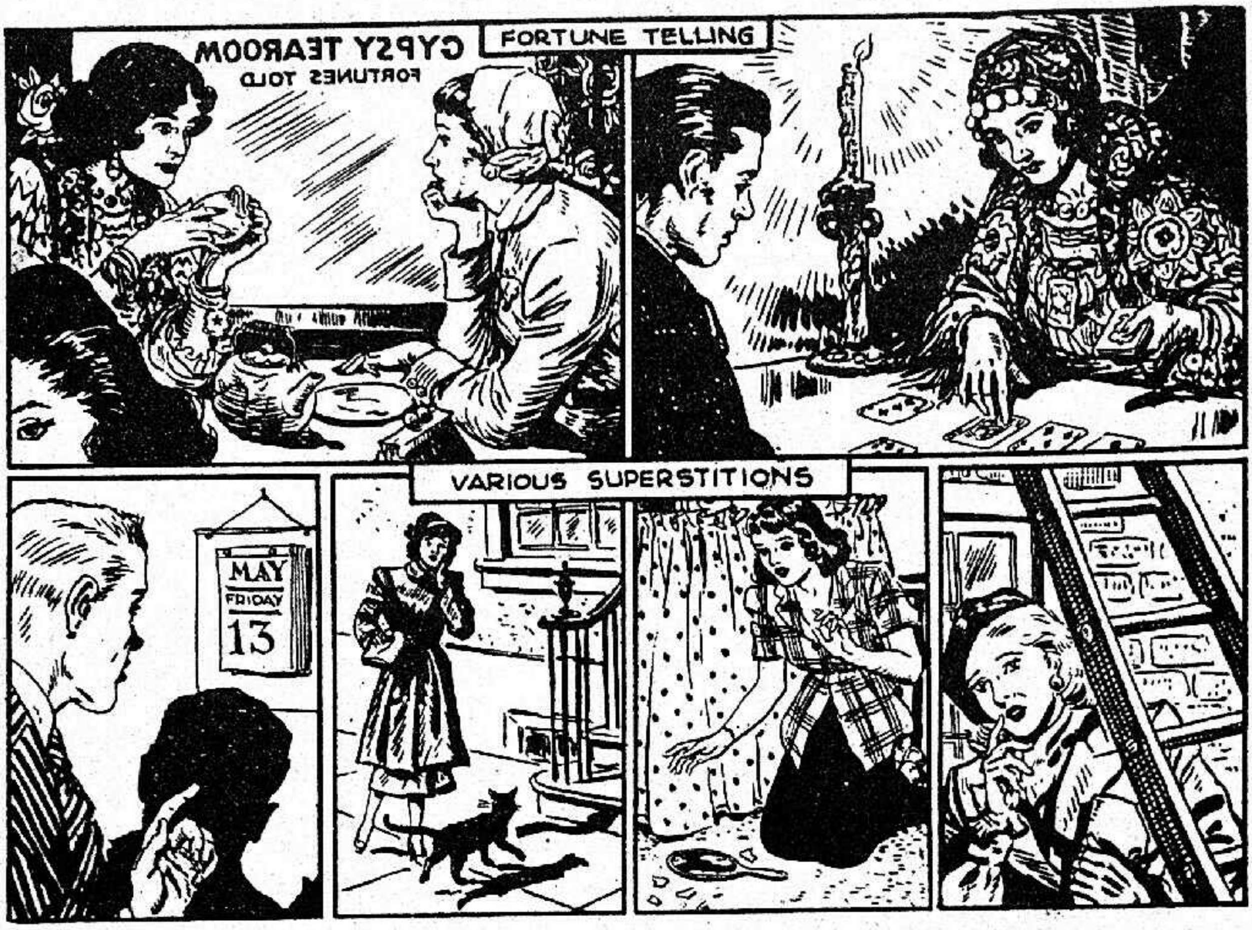
We should *study* our religion well, especially the Christian doctrine. If we have any doubts about it, we should consult a good spiritual adviser or confessor. Many have lost their religion by misunderstanding its doctrines.

2. A strong bulwark to faith is a *good life*. Never does a just man, living according to the teachings of the Church, lose his faith. To increase in faith, let us go to Confession and receive Holy Communion often, that our spirits may be nourished by divine food.

Those who lead bad lives may easily lose their faith. They try to convince themselves that there is no God, no religion, in order to justify their wickedness, or to silence their conscience.

3. We must take care that the books and magazines we *read* are neither wicked nor against the doctrines of the Church. The eyes are the windows of the soul; through them it may be attracted to good or evil.

We must also refrain from being intimate with *enemies* of the Church, who speak against it and assail it on all occasions. Let us avoid pitfalls, that we may not fall into them.



Above are illustrated some of the most common forms of superstition. Sick people or their relatives sometimes resort to witchcraft in a vain hope of cure (1). Many otherwise sensible people resort to fortune-tellers to find out about the future (2). Others believe in signs and omens, (3-5). Superstition, aside from being against the virtue of religion, fetters the mind.

96. Religion and Superstition

How do we worship God by the virtue of religion?—We worship God by the virtue of religion by adoring Him alone as the one and Supreme Being, the chief expression of adoration being prayer.

1. We adore God by *acknowledging* His infinite excellence, our complete dependence upon Him, our absolute subjection to His will; we pray to God by lifting up our minds and hearts to Him.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, veneration of saints, relics, and images, are not opposed to this virtue. We do not worship the saints; we only honor them as the special friends and servants of God. We adore God alone. Neither do we worship images and sacred pictures or relics. We only pay them honor as belonging to or representing God or the saints. In a similar manner we commonly cherish the photographs of our dear friends.

2. The *principal sins* against the virtue of religion are: superstition, sacrilege, idolatry, and simony.

We fail in our duty of worship when we give ourselves to creatures apart from God: when we spend all our lives for the world, for material interests, in pride, lust, or avarice.

When does a person sin by superstition?—A person sins by superstition when he attributes to a creature a power that belongs to God alone.

1. Examples of superstitious practices are: the use of charms or spells, belief in dreams or fortune-telling. As today practiced, all these superstitions are mere *nonsense:* they may be taken only as some social fun, like "bingo." Only idiots actually *believe* in these practices, in mascots, omens, astrology.

As today practiced, manifestations of superstitious beliefs are fraudulent. Those "magicians" merely perform sleight-of-hand tricks; the "witches", "fortune-tellers", and "spiritists" only use their sharp faculties of observation and their retentive memory.

And yet, there are still unintelligent persons who believe in lucky and unlucky days, lucky and unlucky numbers; they actually believe finding a horseshoe is good luck, breaking a mirror means seven years' bad luck, and so on, on and on. On the contrary, all is nonsense, to be laughed at.

2. A *charm* is anything used with the belief that it has magic power to protect. *Spells* are words by the saying of which the superstitious believe evil can be averted, or good fortune obtained.

It is foolish to interpret dreams, because they are most often the result of too heavy a supper. The "dreams" in the Holy Scripture and the lives of the saints are, more properly speaking, revelation or inspiration rather than dreams; God uses particular means for exceptional cases.

3. *Spiritism* consists in attempts to communicate with the spirits of the dead, or with other spirits, usually by the use of mediums and seances. *Magic* refers to manifestations of wonders, through the intervention of evil spirits, whether real or pretended, going as far as invocation of devils.

There is no positive proof that a spiritist or magician has been able to communicate with the spirits of the dead. Houdini, who was the greatest of all magicians, laid a public wager that he could reproduce any spiritistic manifestation by using purely natural means. None of the thousands of magicians and spiritists of his time took him up.

4. If there were such a thing as *fortune-telling*, why do not those fortune-tellers improve their own fortunes by foretelling the rise of the stock market and buying up all the stock? Then they would not need to labor at the telling of fortunes at only so much per fortune predicted.

When does a person sin by sacrilege?— A person sins by sacrilege when he mistreats sacred persons, places, or things.

Sacrilege is a kind of blasphemy consisting of the violation or profanation of a person, place, or thing consecrated to God. For example, it is sacrilege incurring excommunication to lay violent hands upon a priest, a nun, or any other person *consecrated* to God. It is sacrilege to commit acts of impurity or of violence, like killing or fighting, in a church or consecrated graveyard, to receive the sacraments unworthily, to steal sacred vessels or other Church property, to do damage in a church, to despise relics and holy pictures, mutilate images, etc.

Baltassar, King of Babylon, was guilty of sacrilege when he used the sacred vessels of the Temple of Jerusalem as drinking cups at a feast. His punishment, as announced by the handwriting on the wall, is well-known. In order to avoid possible disrespect to sacred images and holy pictures that are already too old to use, we should burn them.

When does a person sin by idolatry?— A person sins by idolatry when he pays to a creature the supreme worship due to God alone as Creator and Preserver of all things.

Divine honor is to be paid to God *alone*. In the early days of Christianity, many Christians were put to death for refusing to burn incense before idols. The old Egyptians, and many pagans today, worship the sun, fire, or animals like the crocodile. God punished the Israelites for their idolatry.

One who knows the Catholic Church to be the True Church, yet refuses to join and obey it, is guilty of *resisting the known Christian truth*, a form of idolatry, since by it one stubbornly denies due worship to God.

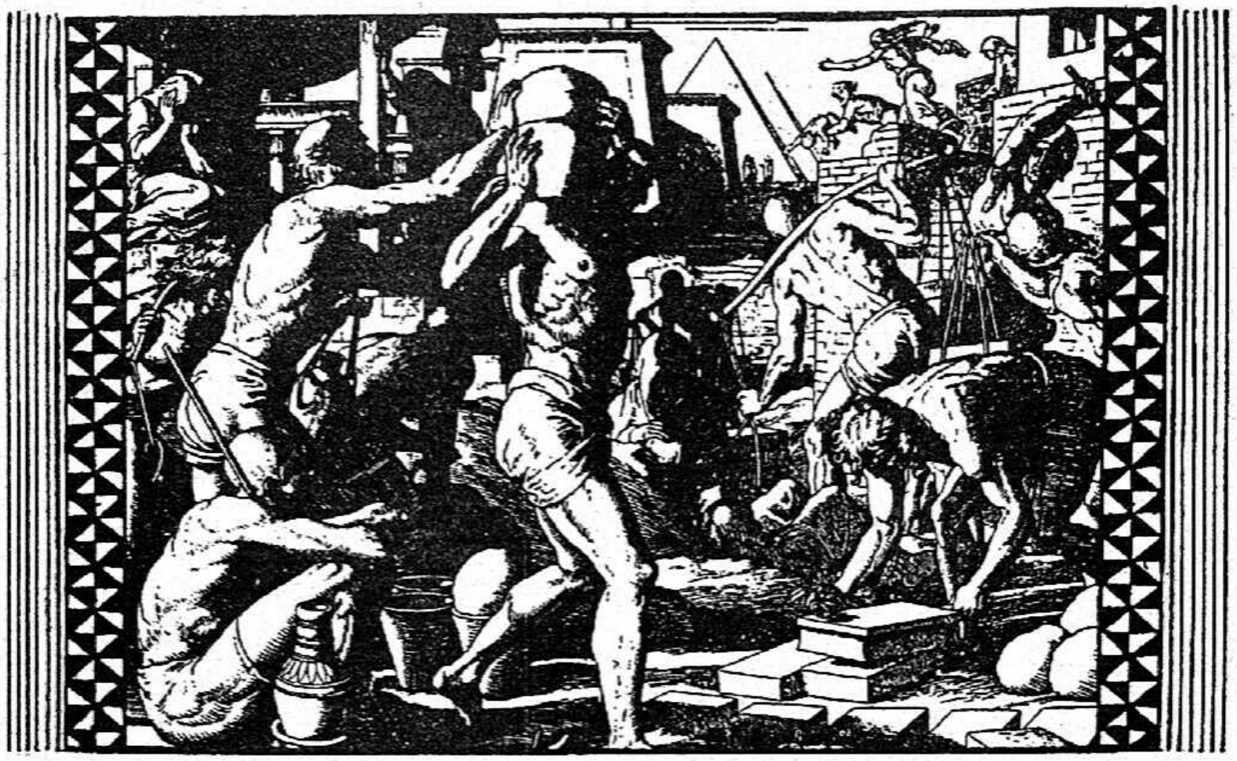
The Scribes and Pharisees knew well all the prophecies concerning the Messias. Jesus Christ proved Himself the promised Messias by wonderful miracles, after announcing Himself as the Son of God. But their pride was a barrier to their humble acknowledgement of Jesus; they calumniated and persecuted Him to the limit. They were guilty of resisting the known Christian truth. Freemasons, especially those who were born and bred Catholics, may be guilty of this sin if they will not permit a priest to approach them on their deathbed: "They stop their ears, not to hear, and make their heart as the adamant stone" (Zach. 7:11).

When does a person sin by simony?— A person sins by simony when he buys or sells sacred or spiritual things or positions.

The term "simony" comes from Simon Magus, who offered the Apostles money to give him the power of giving the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:19-20). It is simony to sell a rosary for more than its ordinary price on account of a blessing it has. Thus sold, indulgenced objects lose their indulgences.

Giving a priest money to say Mass for our intention is not simony, because we do not and cannot buy a Mass. The money is only an offering towards the materials for the Mass, and to help support the priest.

As St. Paul said, "They who serve the altar have their share with the altar. So also the Lord directed that those who preach the Gospel should have their living from the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). It would not be for the dignity of the priesthood nor for the benefit of religious work if priests needed to labor at secular occupations to support themselves.



"There arose a new king over Egypt . . . and he said to his people: Behold, the people of the children of Israel are numerous and stronger than we. Come, let us wisely oppress them, lest they multiply. . . . Therefore he set over them masters of the works to afflict them with burdens, and they built for Pharaoh cities. . . . And the Egyptians hated the children of Israel, and afflicted them, and mocked them. And they made their life bitter with hard works in clay, and brick, and with all manner of service, wherewith they were overcharged in the works of the earth. . . . And the Lord said to Moses: I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry, because of the rigour of them that are over the works" (Ex. 1:8-14; 3:7). God still hears the cry of the oppressed poor.

97. Sins Against Hope and Charity

What are the sins against hope?—The sins against hope are presumption and despair.

When does a person sin by presumption?—A person sins by presumption when he trusts that he can be saved by his own efforts without God's help, or by God's help without his own efforts.

1. One who relies on his own powers, on his friends, or on *earthly things* more than on God commits presumption. He thus puts his hope on "strange gods" in competition with Almighty God. Such hope is purely human, not supernatural, heavenly, or Christian.

Such hope is built on sand, as how many have found out to their distress! Peter thought he was strong, and denied his Lord. "It is good to confide in the Lord, rather than to have confidence in man" (Ps. 117:8). It is this human kind of hope, this presumption, that causes one to expose oneself to occasions of sin, in the belief that one has the strength to resist. "Follow not in thy strength the desires of thy heart: and say not: How mighty am I!" (Ecclus. 5:2-3).

2. It is presumption to *commit sin* boldly, pleading that God easily pardons sinners. Our confidence in God's mercy must always go hand in hand with our knowledge of His justice. In this way, even while we trust in our merciful Father, we have a salutary fear of His judgments. God wishes us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.

Nobody can be absolutely sure that he is safe from hell, that he will persevere in justice till death. What happened to Solomon with all his wisdom, and the blessings God rained on him! "Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). "Unless you repent, you will all perish in the same manner" (Luke 13:3).

3. We must not *tempt God* by exposing ourselves to sin and its occasions in the hope that God will protect and save us; this is *presuming on God's mercy*. We can be sure of God's help only if we try our best to do His will. "He that loveth danger shall perish in it" (Ecclus. 3:27). The greatest saints took as their watchword regarding sin, "Safety in flight",—flight from all occasions that might tempt them to sin. However, those who by their profession or necessity are compelled to expose themselves to even proximate occasions of sin must humbly put their trust in God; He will surely protect them.

It is presumption to expect to be saved by faith alone, without attempting to accomplish good works; to hope to obtain forgiveness of our sins without penance; or while hoping in God's mercy, to remain in the state of sin, and put off conversion. Our Lord said clearly, "*Seek first* the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you besides" (Matt. 6:33).

When does a person sin by despair?—A person sins by despair when he deliberately refuses to trust that God will give him the necessary help to save his soul.

1. *Despair* is an abandonment of all hope for obtaining eternal salvation and the means of attaining it. Despair is wicked, because it is a denial of the goodness of God, and His willingness to forgive.

Cain was guilty of this sin when he cried out after murdering his brother Abel, "My sin is too great to be forgiven" (Gen. 4:13). He is guilty of despair who believes he cannot resist certain temptations, overcome certain sins, or amend his life. Despair results in temporal as well as spiritual evil, because often those in despair commit suicide, as Judas did.

2. When tempted to despair, let us remember that God is *infinitely merciful,* that He is nearest when our need for Him is greatest, and that there is no sin that He will not forgive if we go to Him with a repentant heart.

To avoid sin we may ponder on God's justice and the fear of God; but once we have fallen into sin, let us meditate on His infinite mercy. Let us remember that God is the Good Shepherd Who goes out to seek His sheep that have fallen among the thorns of life. St. John Chrysostom says, "As a spark is to the ocean, so is the wickedness of man compared to the mercy of God."

What are the chief sins against charity?—The chief sins against charity are hatred of God and of our neighbor, sloth, envy, and scandal.

Without charity, faith and hope will profit us nothing, for God will not open the gates of His Kingdom except to those that love Him. "If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1).

1. Every *grave sin* is a violation of charity, because it destroys the love of God. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 11:15). Hatred of God, or of one's neighbor, is a special offense against charity; by it one desires evil or harm to befall, or rejoices at the misfortune of others.

To desire death from a yearning for heaven in order to be reunited with God is not wrong. The Apostle Paul himself sighed, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 9:24). "I am... desiring to depart and to be with Christ" (Philipp. 1:23). But to desire death out of impatience or despair, or to wish death or misfortune to another out of selfishness or hatred, is sinful.

2. *Sloth* is a sin against charity, because it paralyzes the faculties of the soul. One who is ruled by sloth is too lazy to love God or his neighbor, because such love or zeal takes trouble.

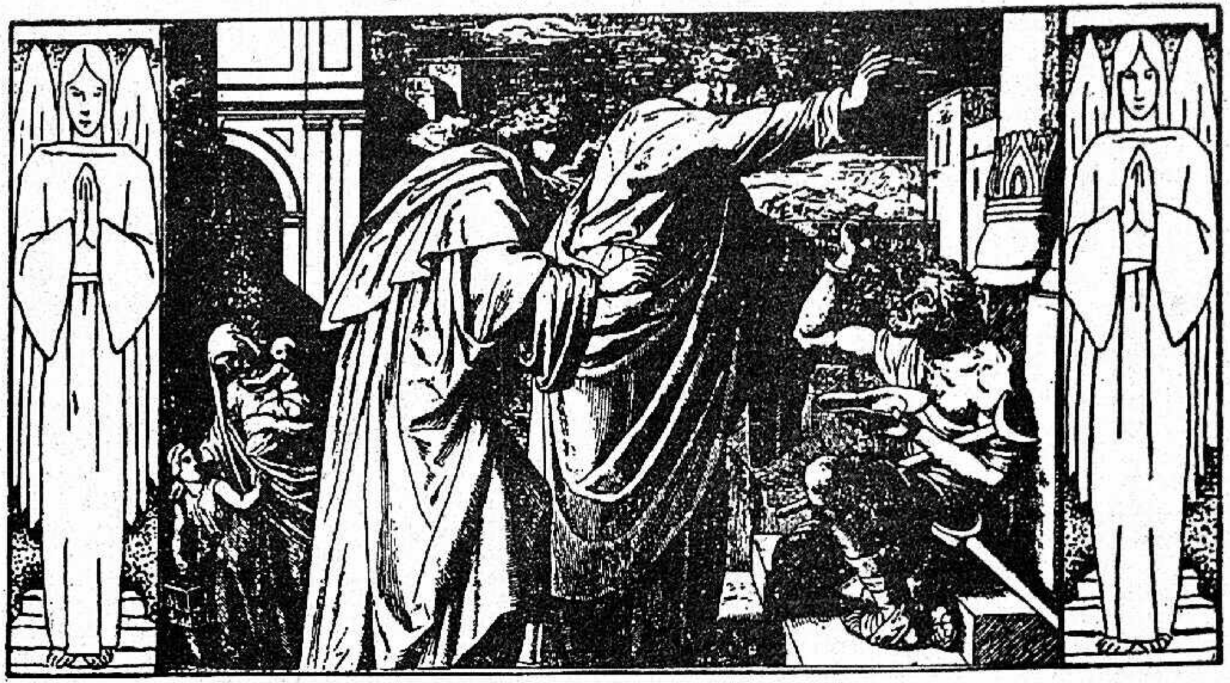
Sloth begets tepidity and indifference. Someone has said with truth that a great sinner may become a great saint, but a slothful person, never.

3. One is guilty of *envy* if one is bitter about another's good fortune, considering such as a detraction from one's own well-being. An envious man is sour against the good and holy, wishing he had their attainments, but taking no steps to improve himself.

Envy is the sin of the devil, the sin above all that implies malice, the sin that leads to calumny, gossip, hatred, and other sins. The best means of overcoming envy is to do every good possible to our neighbor, especially to the one that we are tempted to envy. There is no reason for envy; it will not make us any richer, more popular, more satisfied. Satan envied Adam and Eve, so happy in Paradise. The Pharisees envied Jesus Christ the wonderful miracles He worked, and His consequent great following.

4. *Scandal* is given when we injure our neighbor's soul by causing or tempting him to sin. As charity helps him towards heaven, so scandal pushes him towards hell.

Our Lord said that at the end of the world the angels "will gather out of his kingdom all scandals ... and cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be the weeping, and the gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41-42). (*See pages* 218-219).



By the most holy Name of Jesus the Apostles worked innumerable miracles. Among the first examples was that of the lame man that sat and begged at the gate of the Temple. Upon seeing Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he asked for an alms. Peter said, "Silver and gold I have none; but what I have that I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk" (Acts 3:6). *And the man lame from birth leaped up and walked into the Temple, praising God.*

98. The Second Commandment

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

What are we commanded by the second commandment?—By the second commandment we are commanded always to speak with reverence of God, of the saints, and of holy things, and to be truthful in taking oaths, and faithful to them and to our vows.

"Blessed be the name of the Lord, from henceforth now and for ever. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise" (Ps. 112:2-3). "I say to you not to swear at all . . . But let your speech be, 'Yes, yes'; 'No, no' " (Matt. 5:34,37). "The tongue no man can tame . . . Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing" (Jas. 3:8,10).

1. We should never speak God's name without holy respect. We should frequently *call upon the name of God* with true and heartfelt devotion, especially at the commencement and end of all our important actions, and in time of trouble.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. 49:15). We should often praise God for His perfections and infinite goodness, and particularly when we receive favors from Him. It is strange how often good gifts come to us from Almighty God, and we simply take without a word of thanks. Let us say that old saying of truly Christian hearts, *Deo gratias!* Thanks be to God! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all he hath done for thee" (Ps. 102:1).

2. The *name of Jesus* is the most powerful of all names; through it we can obtain all that we need. "If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you" (John 16:23). We should pay reverence to the name of Jesus by bowing every time we speak it. We should especially pronounce the name of Jesus at the hour of death.

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). St. Stephen's last words were: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). By the name of Jesus the apostles and saints worked innumerable miracles, as St. Peter did when he said to the lame man, "In the name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk" (Acts 3:6). Holy Scripture truly says, "There is no other name under heaven given to men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

What is meant by taking God's name in

vain?—By taking God's name in vain is meant that the name of God or the holy name of Jesus Christ is used without reverence: for example, to express surprise or anger.

"And let not the naming of God be usual in thy mouth, and meddle not with the names of saints, for thou shalt not escape free from them" (Eccles. 23:10).

1. *Profanity* is the use of irreverent language. We should not use sacred names in impatience, jest, mere surprise, or habit, with *no idea of paying God honor*. The habit shows a lack of proper reverence.

Many have the habit of exclaiming at every *trifling* circumstance: "Good Lord!" "My God!" "Jesus, Mary, Joseph!" It is a thoughtless habit that should be corrected. It is wrong likewise to quote Holy Scripture in a light or irreverent manner.

2. We should distinguish between profanity and *vulgarity*. Profanity is a sin of irreverence; vulgarity is not necessarily sinful.

Vulgarity is the use of coarse expressions like "devil," "hell," etc., through thoughtlessness or habit. It is a *breach of good manners*, and if indulged in will lead to profanity. If used with malice, vulgarity is certainly a sin. By all means we should avoid both vulgarity and profanity.

3. Let us use God's holy Name only in prayer and adoration. Irreverence to that Name is sacrilege, since by the sin we profane a holy thing. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord his God in vain" (Exod. 20:7).

Among the ancient Jews the word for God was so sacred that even the high priest could speak it only once a year, at the feast of the Atonement, when he entered the most sacred part of the Temple.

4. It is a sin to take God's name in vain; ordinarily, it is a venial sin.

The Holy Name Society aims to promote love and reverence for the Holy Name of God and Jesus Christ; to suppress and make reparations for blasphemy, perjury, forbidden oaths, profanity, and any improper language. Every man should be a member of this Society, which is only for men. At present the membership (1950) is 3,500,000; most Catholic policemen of New York City are faithful members.

What is cursing?—Cursing is the calling down of some evil on a person, place, or thing.

1. To *call down* some punishment on ourselves or other creatures of God in a moment of anger, is cursing. If the name of God is used, the sin is worse.

When angry, parents sometimes curse their children, and workmen their animals and tools. Often the one who curses does not mean what he says. If he does, it is indeed a most grievous sin to ask God to damn a person or send him to hell.

2. A Christian should *never curse*. "For such as bless him shall inherit the land; but such as curse him shall perish" (Ps. 36:22).

The habit of cursing is an indication of lack of refinement and of self-control. Gentlemen do not curse. Generally we know the origin of a person by the words that come forth from his mouth; one who curses advertises his origin as the gutter.

What is blasphemy?—Blasphemy is insulting language which expresses contempt for God, either directly or through His saints and holy things.

1. Contemptuous or abusive language against God, scoffing at the true religion, or *ridiculing* sacred ceremonies, — all these are blasphemous. Sacrilege is a form of blasphemy; irreverent actions and thoughts against God, the saints and angels, or holy persons and things, are also blasphemous.

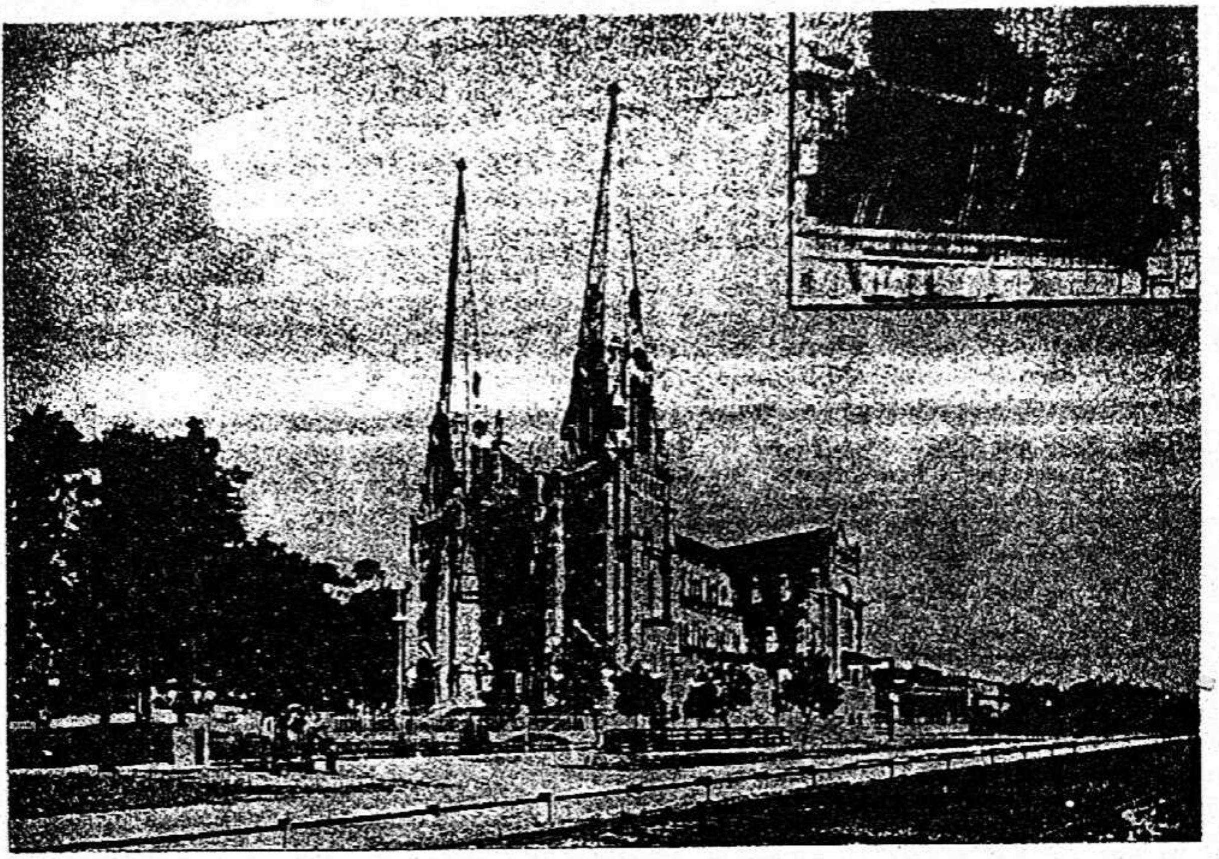
In the Old Law the blasphemer was condemned to death. "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die: all the multitude shall stone him" (Lev. 24:16). It is blasphemy to speak scornfully of God or of His actions; or to attribute to a creature a prerogative of God. Thus the people blasphemed when they said, after King Herod had spoken to them: "It is the voice of a god and not of a man" (Acts 12:22).

2. Blasphemy is a sin of the devil. By insulting *language against God*, one offends the Almighty directly, not only His image. Blasphemy is essentially malicious, not as other sins that arise from human weakness or ignorance.

"Whom hast thou blasphemed, against whom hast thou exalted thy voice? Against the holy One of Israel" (4 Kings 19:22). The soldiers blasphemed Christ; so did the impenitent thief.

3. Deliberate blasphemy is one of the gravest sins. God punishes it even on earth with severe chastisements, and in hell after death. "God is not mocked" (Gal. 6:7).

King Baltassar used the sacred vessels for his feasting. A strange hand wrote his fate on the wall; that same night the enemy entered his city, killed him, and made his kingdom part of the empire of the Medes and Persians. King Sennacherib blasphemed God, and died by the hand of his own sons. But the worst punishment will be after death; one cannot blaspheme God and escape unpunished. "They shall be cursed that shall despise thee" (Tob. 13:16).



A sailor, threatened with shipwreck, swore, if saved, to have a chapel built in honor of St. Anne, at the place of his safe landing. He was saved; hence the shrine at Beaupré, Quebec, Canada.

Thousands flock to that famous shrine, one of the most miraculous in the world. The crutches and spectacles lined along the walls are a proof of the miraculous cures.

99. Oaths and Vows

What is an oath?—An oath is the calling on God to witness to the truth of what we say.

1. Taking an oath is called *swearing*. In swearing, we call either upon God or upon something sacred. In solemn oaths, we place a hand on the Bible, or kiss it. Sometimes we also kiss the crucifix.

If we swear by God, such words are used as: "God is my witness," "So help me God," "As the Lord liveth," etc. If we swear by holy things, we say: "By the holy Gospel," "by the cross of Christ," etc. *Such expressions* as "Upon my word," "by my honor," are not oaths but merely emphasize assertions.

2. An oath may be *simple or solemn*. A simple oath is one between man and man in ordinary intercourse. A solemn oath is one taken before ecclesiastical or civil authority, in the presence of an official.

An oath of public office is a solemn oath. The formula used ends with: "So help me God." Our Lord swore solemnly when Caiphas adjured Him by the Living God to tell the truth (Matt. 26:64).

3. We must not take an oath of *blind obedience* to a secret society.

It is lawful to take an oath of obedience, however, to a religious superior, because such a superior can command obedience only in such orders as are in consonance with the law of God and the Church.

4. A promise under oath *ceases to bind* under certain conditions:

(a) if it is relaxed by the person to whom the promise was given;
(b) if the object of the promise is substantially changed;
(c) if the object becomes sinful or useless;
(d) if the reason for the oath ceases to exist;
(e) if a condition under which the oath was given ceases; and
(f) if the oath is annulled, dispensed, or commuted by lawful authority.

What things are necessary to make an oath lawful?—To make an oath lawful, three things are necessary:

1. We must have a good reason for taking an oath.—An oath properly taken is permitted by God and pleasing in His sight. No one should be compelled to take an oath, however. It is not necessary to swear at every provocation, such as when friends do not believe us, or to emphasize statements.

Such trivial matters should not be the subject of oaths. A number of people have the bad habit of raising the hand in a gesture of swearing every time someone doubts their slightest assertions. "Thou shalt swear, As the Lord liveth, in truth and in judgment, and in justice" (Jer. 4:2).

2. We must be convinced that what we say under oath is true.—It is wrong to take oaths about what we do not know, just because a friend asks us to swear to it.

If we take an oath, promising to do something, and in our mind we have plans of breaking our word, then we are swearing falsely. If we take an oath before a court of justice, saying we saw such and such a person in a certain place at a certain hour, and we know we really did not see him, then we are swearing falsely. We must think well before taking an oath; rash oaths are sinful.

3. We must not swear, that is, take an oath, to do what is wrong.—We are bound to keep our oaths. But we should never keep an oath to do evil. If one is so unfortunate as to have made such an evil oath, he should promptly determine not to keep it, or he will commit greater sins.

Herod swore to grant Salome, the daughter of his unlawful wife, anything she asked. When she demanded the head of St. John the Baptist, he gave it to her. Thus he committed a worse crime by keeping his wicked and rash oath.

What great sin does a person commit who deliberately calls on God to bear witness to a lie?—A person who deliberately calls on God to bear witness to a lie commits the very grievous sin of perjury.

1. *Perjury* is false swearing. One commits perjury when he confirms by oath what he knows is not true, or what he is doubtful about, or when he swears to a promise which he does not intend to keep.

Perjury is a grave sin, because it *insults God* by calling Him to witness a lie. Perjury before a civil court of law is punishable by imprisonment.

2. Regarding the *non-fulfillment* of an oath, the sin may be venial or grave, according to importance of the matter concerned.

The witnesses who swore falsely at the trial of Christ committed a grave sin of perjury. If we have to be witnesses in a court, let us pray God to deliver us from the sin of perjury. If circumstances arise that prevent our keeping a valid oath, we should consult our confessor, to know what to do.

What is a vow?—A vow is a deliberate promise made to God, by which a person binds himself under pain of sin to do something that is especially pleasing to God.

1. A vow is made to *God alone,* not to anyone else. The subject of the vow must not be a mere trifle, but something good in itself, and better than its opposite. A vow is the most solemn promise we can ever make.

A vow made under compulsion is invalid. A vow to do something that will offend God must not be accomplished. In general we should *consult our confessor* before making a vow. "It is better not to vow, than after a vow not to perform the things promised" (Eccles. 5:4).

Sometimes vows are accompanied by certain conditions. For example, in 1248, St. Louis of France vowed to lead a Crusade if he got over a severe illness. In our days, people vow to go on specified pilgrimages, to get cured of sickness, etc.

2. We must not *confuse* vows and oaths with mere promises or resolutions. These last do not bind under pain of sin.

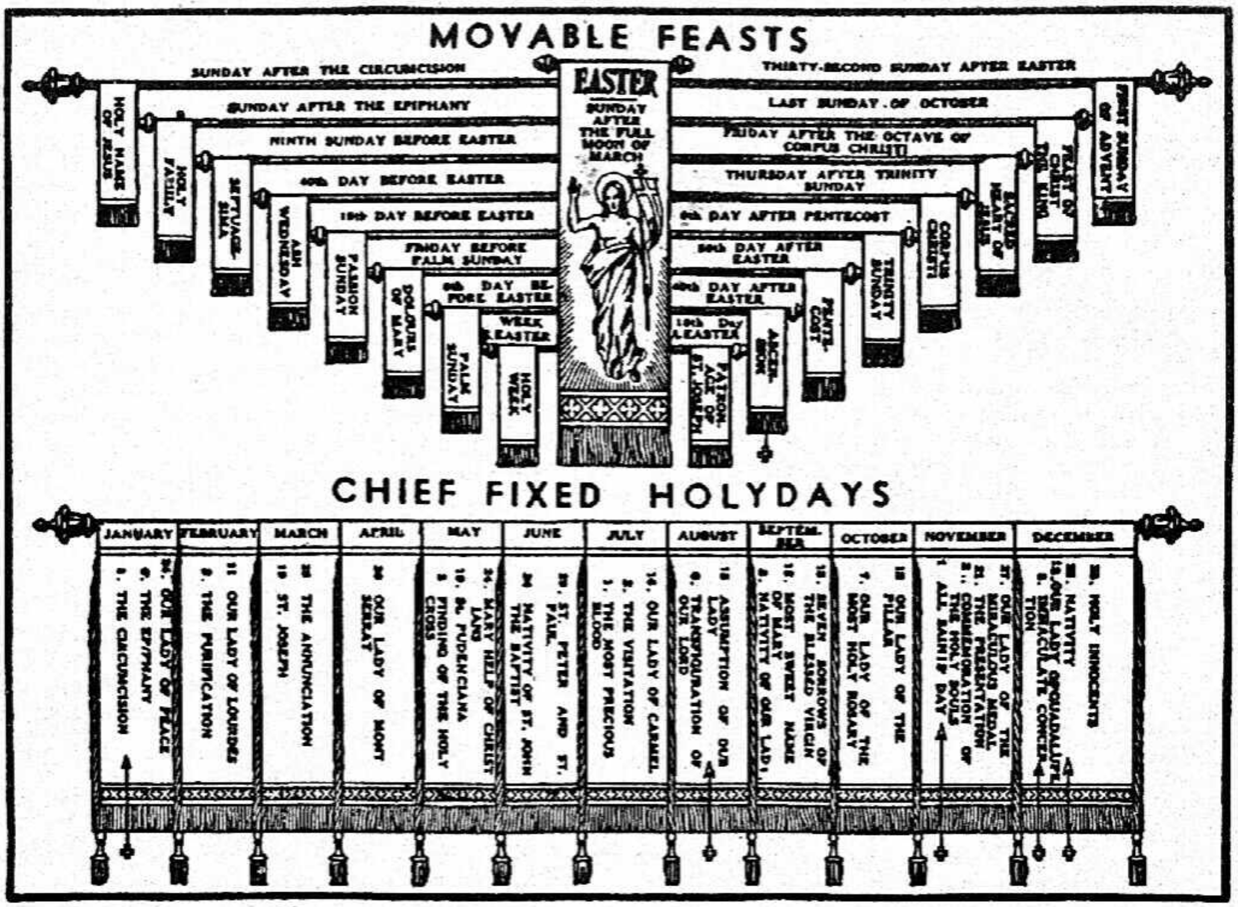
For instance, some make a promise not to go to shows or dances for a certain length of time. If they go, they do not commit a mortal sin, for simple promises and resolutions do not bind under pain of sin. However, we should not make promises or resolutions that we are not *earnest about keeping.*

3. A vow is most pleasing to God, because it is a voluntary offering made to Him. The most important vows are the *religious vows,* taken by those joining a religious order: vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

By the religious vows a person gives up the world entirely, consecrating not only what he does, but what he is to the exclusive service of God.

4. Non-fulfillment, or needless postponement, of a vow is a *venial or mortal sin,* according to the importance of the matter.

The guilt is doubled, if at the same time one transgress a commandment, as when violating a vow of chastity. If we are not able to fulfill a vow, we must consult our confessor about having it annulled or changed into some other good work. The vows of children may be cancelled by their parents. Bishops and other superiors have authority to release or absolve from some vows.


MOVABLE FEASTS
SUNDAY AFTER THE CIRCUMCISION
HOLY NAME OF JESUS
SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
HOLY FAMILY
NINTH SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER
SEPTUAGESIMA
40th DAY BEFORE EASTER
ASH WEDNESDAY
14th DAY BEFORE EASTER
PASSION SUNDAY
FRIDAY BEFORE PALM SUNDAY
DOLOURS OF MARY
8th DAY BEFORE EASTER
PALM SUNDAY
WEEK B. EASTER
HOLY WEEK
EASTER
SUNDAY AFTER THE FULL MOON OF MARCH
18th Day A. EASTER
PATRONAGE OF ST. JOSEPH
40th DAY AFTER EASTER
ASCENSION
50th DAY AFTER EASTER
PENTECOST
8th DAY AFTER PENTECOST
TRINITY SUNDAY
THURSDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY
CORPUS CHRISTI
FRIDAY AFTER THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI
SACRED HEART OF JESUS
LAST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER
FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING
THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHIEF FIXED HOLYDAYS
JANUARY
1. THE CIRCUMCISION
6. THE EPIPHANY
24. OUR LADY OF PEACE
FEBRUARY
2. THE PURIFICATION
11 OUR LADY OF LOURDES
MARCH
19 ST. JOSEPH
25 THE ANNUNCIATION
APRIL
28 OUR LADY OF MONTSERRAT
MAY
3 FINDING OF THE HOLY CROSS
10. St. PUDENCIANA
24. MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS
JUNE
24 NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
29. ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL
JULY
1. THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD
2. THE VISITATION
16. OUR LADY OF CARMEL
AUGUST
6. TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
15 ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY
SEPTEMBER
8. NATIVITY OF OUR LADY
12. MOST SWEET NAME OF MARY
15. SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
OCTOBER
7. OUR LADY OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY
12 OUR LADY OF THE PILLAR
NOVEMBER
1 ALL SAINTS DAY
2. COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY SOULS
21. THE PRESENTATION
27. OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL
DECEMBER
8. IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
12. OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
25. NATIVITY
28. HOLY INNOCENTS

In these tables the holydays of obligation which do not necessarily fall on a Sunday are marked by crosses. They are to be observed exactly as the Sunday by hearing Mass, abstaining from unnecessary servile work, and doing other pious exercises. The other feasts which do not fall on a Sunday are not of obligation. They are, however, important feasts, and all who can should at least hear Mass on those days. If we can visit human friends on days important to them, why not God?

100. The Third Commandment

"Remember thou keep holy the Lord's day."

What are we commanded by the third commandment?—By the third commandment we are commanded to worship in a special manner on Sunday, the Lord's day.

"Keep you my sabbath: for it is holy unto you: he that shall profane it, shall be put to death: he that shall do any work in it, his soul shall perish out of the midst of his people. Six days shall you do work: In the seventh day is the sabbath, the rest holy to the Lord" (Exodus 31:14-15).

1. God commanded the *observance* of a definite day, in order that man may devote one day a week to the special worship of his Creator. Natural law obliges man to adore and thank God for His continuous blessings.

If God gives us six days to work for ourselves, we ought to be glad to devote one day to Him exclusively. The day enables us to *join in public worship* and receive religious instruction. The rest benefits both body and soul. If we had to work always, seven days a week, year in and year out, our *health* would break under the strain.

2. In the *Old Law*, the celebration of a definite day, the sabbath, had been ordered only specially for the Jews, just as circumcision and bloody sacrifices had been. The Old Law was abrogated upon institution of the New (Acts 10:15; Col. 2:16; Gal. 4:10-11).

In the *Old Law* the Jews kept holy the seventh day of the week, Saturday. It was their day of rest. The vital principle of the Third Commandment was not the specific day, but that one day out of seven should be devoted to the worship of God the Creator.

Why does the Church command us to keep Sunday as the Lord's day?—The Church commands us to keep Sunday as the Lord's day, because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles.

1. In the *New Law,* Christ delegated His authority to the Church, His Living Voice. It remained then for the Church to indicate the ceremonial day to be kept holy.

The Church of the time of the Apostles observed the first day of the week, Sunday, in honor of the Resurrection and Pentecost, which both took place on a Sunday. In the same way the early Church caused circumcision and bloody sacrifices to make way for Baptism and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. In the *New Law,* Catholics keep holy the first day of the week, Sunday, It is called ***"The Lord's Day".*** St. Paul refers twice to its observance. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).

How does the Church command us to worship God on Sunday?—The Church commands us to worship God on Sunday by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

1. The obligation of Mass is *binding* on all persons who have attained the use of reason; that is, including children seven years old. Those who find it impossible, or very difficult, to hear Mass, are excused.

The sick, the very aged and infirm, and those engaged in works of necessity at the hour of Mass, are *excused* from attending it. Those who live too far to walk and have no conveyance are also excused. Very bad weather may be sufficient excuse.

2. Not to hear Sunday Mass, or to miss a notable part of Sunday Mass, is a *mortal sin.* To come a little late and not make up for it in another Mass, is a venial sin.

The precept is to hear an entire Mass from beginning to end; that is, from the Priest's entrance into the sanctuary till his departure into the sacristy. One is considered to have missed Mass if one arrives too late to be present at the Offertory (when the Priest uncovers the chalice), or leaves before the Communion is finished. The principal parts—that is, the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion—must be heard in one and the same Mass.

3. Those who on every *slight pretext* excuse themselves from their obligation of hearing Sunday Mass will gradually slip into religious carelessness and indifference. We should be sturdy Christians, and not let anything but impossibility or serious illness interfere with our hearing Mass on Sunday.

Not to have a new or clean dress is not sufficient reason for staying away from Sunday Mass. Neither is an excursion that leaves early a reason. One should go to Mass before going on the excursion.

4. Mass is not our only obligation on Sunday, for God commands us to sanctify the *whole day,* and not only a part of it. We should perform other good works.

We may hear sermons or instruction, receive the sacraments, attend vespers or benediction, read the Bible or other spiritual books, say the rosary, attend a sodality or confraternity meeting, visit the Blessed Sacrament, the poor, the sick, and perform other works of mercy. It is not an obligation to spend the entire Sunday in such works, but we should try to give as much time to them as we can, for the love of God. If we do things not required for the love of our friends on earth, how much more eager we should be to do them for our best Friend of all, God!

How should we hear Mass?—We should hear Mass with attention and devotion.

1. We should be in church a few minutes *before the beginning* of Mass, to prepare for it, and not leave before the priest leaves.

If we arrive after the beginning of Mass, but before the uncovering of the chalice for the Offertory, we should make up for our lateness by attending the next Mass at least up to the uncovering of the chalice. If we arrive when the chalice is already uncovered, we must hear another entire Mass.

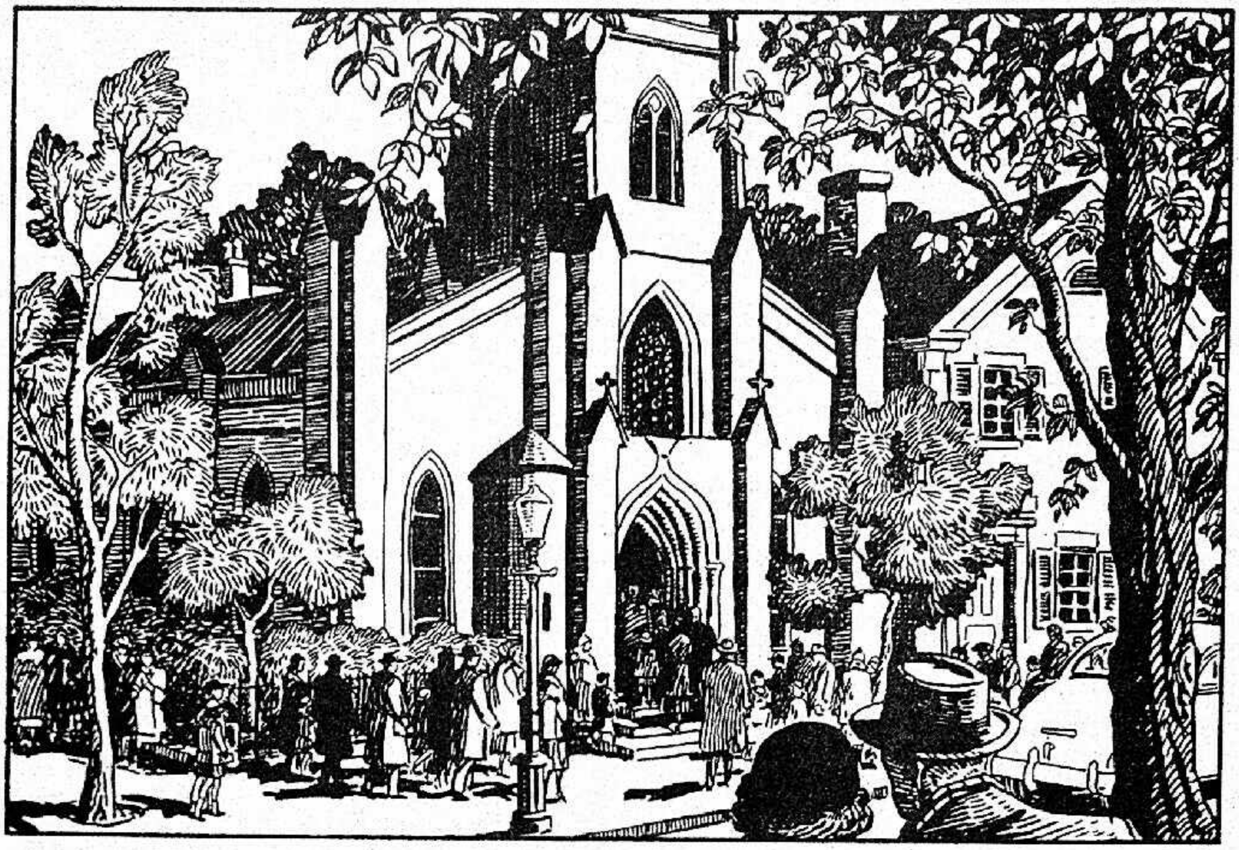
2. Not only must we be *bodily* present at the Mass; we must also have at least an implicit *intention* of participating, avoiding deliberate distractions, and not look around, laugh, or carry on conversations.

It is a serious lack of reverence for the word of God to leave the church during the sermon.

3. Most persons find it easiest to *follow the Mass* by reading a prayer book. Others use a missal, following the actions of the priest. This last is the best way of participating in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for then we can best share in Christ's sacrifice, uniting our intentions to His, offering ourselves with Him to the Heavenly Father.

It is an honor to be permitted to assist in some way at Holy Mass. Today laymen are allowed to perform services that were previously reserved to those in orders, such as serving at Mass, etc. In many parishes there are Altar-boy Societies; then all boys should try to become members.

4. We should be generous with our *offerings* for the collection-box. Even children should be trained to put in a few cents out of their pocket-money. We must remember our obligation to help support our pastors.



The illustration shows a parish church on a Sunday morning. The people are hastening to church, to obey the precept of hearing Mass. It is a mortal sin to fail to sanctify Sundays and holydays through our own fault. To keep these days holy, we must hear Mass, abstain from servile work, and devote the day to pious works. Wholesome recreation and innocent amusements which do not interfere with our religious obligations are allowed; too often, however, "fun" appears to be the main feature.

101. Unnecessary Servile Work

What is forbidden by the third commandment of God?—By the third commandment of God all unnecessary servile work on Sunday is forbidden.

What is servile work?—Servile work is that which requires labor of body rather than of mind.

1. Servile work is that ordinarily performed by *laborers*. Work in which the mind has the greater share, such as reading, writing, teaching, drawing, studying, and music practice is not servile, and is not forbidden.

Servile work performed on Sunday is not considered a grievous sin unless it is continued beyond *two hours*, or becomes the cause of scandal or bad example.

2. *Employers* who force their employees to do unnecessary servile work on Sunday are responsible for the violation of the Third Commandment. Employers should make it possible for the employees to comply with their religious duties.

The trial of lawsuits and public buying and selling, are also forbidden. Catholics should make provision on Saturday for their food and other necessities of Sunday, so that no store may be forced to keep open.

3. The non-observance of Sunday is often attended with *material evils*, such as poverty and sickness. God is the God of nature as well as of the Law.

Those who do not observe Sunday and keep working often lose their health and thereby sink deeper and deeper into poverty. Those who desecrate Sunday and do not hear Mass fall into all kinds of vices. In Holy Scripture we find the Jews losing their Holy City and being taken into captivity, because they violated the sabbath.

When is servile work allowed on Sunday?—Servile work is allowed on Sunday when the honor of God, our own need, or that of our neighbor requires it.

1. Preparing a place for Holy Mass is a work for the *honor of God*, and may be done even on a Sunday.

In a parish where the women are all occupied during the week, and can meet for their altar society meetings only on Sundays, it would be allowed for them to sew or repair vestments for the church.

2. Work of *daily necessity* such as cooking, cleaning, and sweeping, and buying and selling of necessary food may be performed even on Sunday. Sewing is not permitted, as it is not of necessity. Even servile work when *necessary* for one s support, for the common good, or to prevent serious financial loss, is permitted on Sunday.

Farmers are allowed to care for their cattle and domestic animals, and even to get in crops that otherwise might spoil. Our Lord does not desire man to suffer on account of Sunday, for He says: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

3. Servile work needed by our *neighbor* may be performed on Sunday.

For example, a farmer who has attended all week to his own farm may help a sick neighbor attend to his on Sunday.

4. Those *in charge* of persons who are necessarily on duty on Sunday, such as policemen, foremen, soldiers, etc., are obliged to give them an opportunity to hear Mass, if not every Sunday, at least as often as possible.

Domestic help can easily be permitted to go to Mass, if their duties are properly arranged.

Are amusements forbidden on Sunday?—Amusements are not forbidden on Sunday; only those that interfere with the Sunday obligations are forbidden.

1. Sunday is a day of *rest*. On Sunday, therefore, we are permitted to relax from our daily work, in wholesome recreation.

Not too much emphasis should be given in *competitive games* as to which side wins or loses. A good loser is better than a poor winner who is proud of himself.

"God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from all his work" (Gen. 2:3). If God, Who needed no "rest", chose to stop His work of creation, we should imitate His divine example and rest after six days of labor. The experience of all peoples has borne out the wisdom of this practice of resting one day out of the week. As an example we may cite the case of the French Revolution. The French atheists in control wished to change the old order completely, and went so far as to change the number of days in the week to ten. They could not, however, retain the new week, for even the work animals, unable to endure work without rest, died of exhaustion.

2. To attend entertainments such as dances up to a late hour on Saturday night, even when in themselves they are not wrong, is a poor way of *preparing* for the Lord's day. Those who stay up late Saturday night are inclined to oversleep on Sunday morning. As a result, if they do not omit Mass altogether, they will not hear it devoutly.

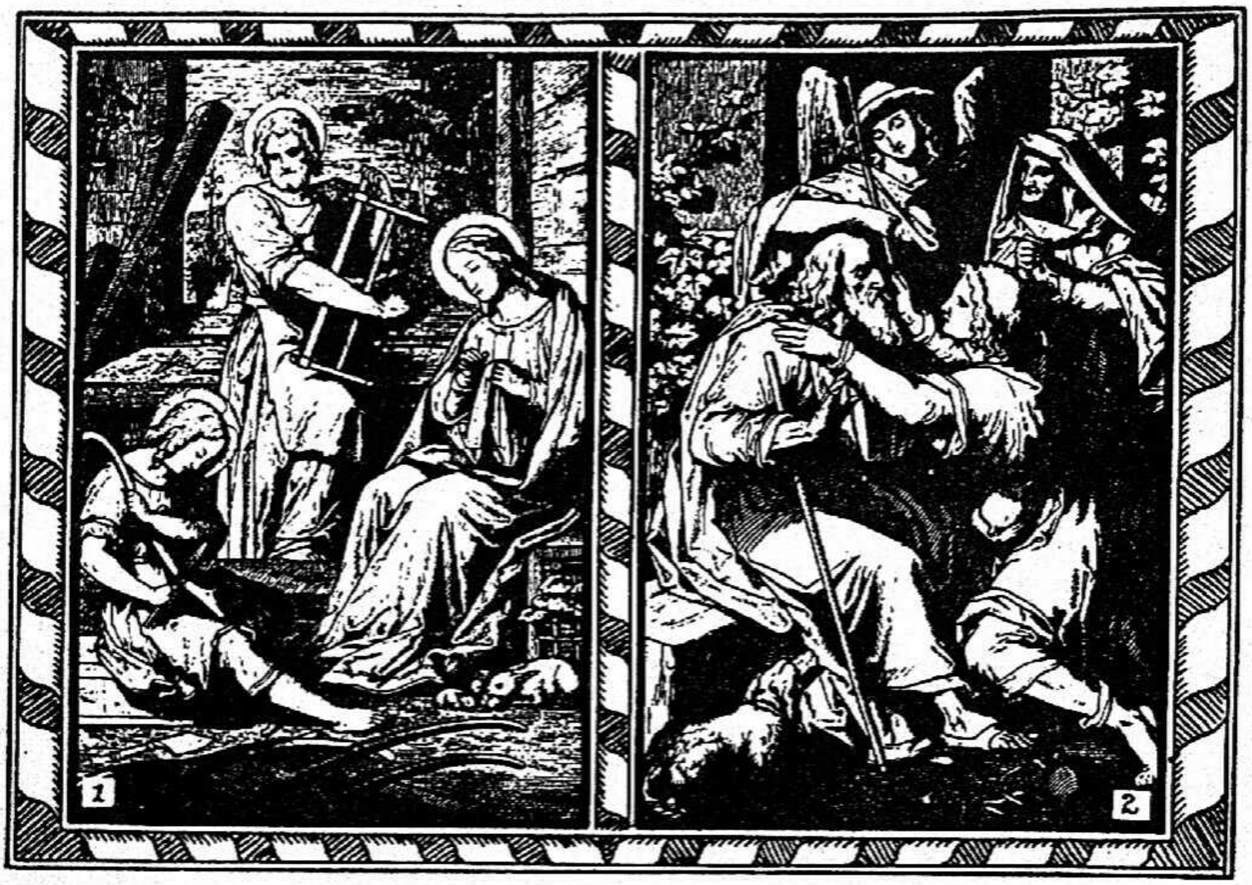
An outstanding example of such entertainments is the New Year's eve all-night dancing so fashionable in these days. People go to dances and carousals in different varieties of dress and undress, with paint, powder, and all kinds of worldly decorations on their persons. Then those that feel a twinge of conscience run out for an intermission of Mass, to return perhaps to the dance, or to go home to sleep all the day of New Year, the feast of the Circumcision, a holyday of obligation! Let any reasonable man say whether this kind of amusement is in consonance with the commandment to sanctify the Lord's day.

3. Some people seem to take advantage of Sunday to *indulge* more freely in useless or sinful pastimes. It is a scandal to see people engaged in excessive eating, drinking, dancing, and vanity on Sunday, of all days. It is an abuse of a sacred institution: the Lord's Day. "The kingdom of God does not consist in food and drink" (Rom. 14:17).

To many the Lord's day and holydays are nothing more than days of enjoyment. What was intended as an accompaniment becomes the main theme. Not infrequently Sunday is taken as a favorite day for gambling, drinking, and other vices. Then indeed is God's day desecrated, and God robbed of the honor due Him.

4. When Sunday is *desecrated* by vice and unrestrained pleasure, we can expect by this loosening of morals the gradual dissolution of family ties and the final disintegration of society.

Neglecting common worship, members of the family become indifferent to each other. Children turn stubborn and disobedient. The father hardly stays home, and knows strangers better than his own children. Since the children lose respect for their parents, it is an easy step to loss of respect for all authority, including the secular power. Thus by forgetting God's day, men live like heathen and will die outside God's grace.



(1). The Child Jesus should be our model of obedience: "And he went down with them (Mary and Joseph) and came to Nazareth and was subject to them" (Luke 2:51). Our Lord, God Himself, lived in humble obedience to two mortals, Mary and Joseph, to give us an example.

The picture (2) shows Tobias, a model of a good son, curing his father of his blindness.

102. The Fourth Commandment

"Honor thy father and thy mother."

What are we commanded by the fourth commandment?—By the fourth commandment we are commanded to respect and love our parents, to obey them in all that is not sinful, and to help them when they are in need.

The word "honor" in this commandment includes the doing of everything leading to the welfare, both material and spiritual, of our parents.

1. One *respects* his parents (a) by reverencing them as holding God's place; (b) by accepting their corrections willingly; and (c) by excusing and hiding their faults.

It was God Himself who gave us our parents, and we reverence God when we respect them who are His direct representatives over us. Respect is one duty towards his parents that a child, however old and famous he may become in later life, will always owe his parents. "The eye that mocketh at his father and that despiseth the labor of his mother in bearing him, let the ravens of the brooks pick it out and the young eagles eat it" (Prov. 30:17).

2. One *loves* his parents by trying to please them, by helping them, and praying for them. Children who love their parents make their home a place of joy and peace.

A loving child does not wait to be commanded by his parents, but will do all he can for them, help them out, and accomplish their wishes as far as he can, without a word from them.

3. A young child should *obey* his parents without question, complaint, or delay, just as he is told. He will show himself glad to obey. *Older children* may inquire about the reasons for certain commands, but they too should obey their parents in everything

lawful. They will do what their parents wish, even before they are asked. They will obey willingly and promptly.

Because parents are the direct representatives of God over their children, such children owe them obedience. Obedience that is the result of fear of punishment or a trick to get some favor is not true Christian obedience, and much of the merit is lost. "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee" (Ex. 20:12).

4. It is a mistake for one to think he *knows more* than his parents. It is his duty to consult them about important steps he contemplates, as marriage, etc. In all important things, godfearing parents know more than their children. When a child is unwilling or ashamed to let his parents know about something, it is generally wrong.

If in doubt as to the goodness of an action, one should consult his parents or confessor.

5. A grown-up child should *provide* for his parents in need, and make their lives as comfortable as possible. For example, an adult son with earnings should support his old parents who have nothing. He should help out with the younger children.

We should especially provide for our parents' last illness. We should call the priest for their last Confession, Viaticum, and Extreme Unction. After their death we should provide a worthy *funeral* according to our means. We should pray, and have Masses said for them annually at least, and faithfully carry out their last wishes.

6. The perfect *model* of obedience is the Child Jesus. All children should have Him for their model. He, God Himself, was subject to Mary and Joseph all the time that He lived with them in Nazareth.

"He that honoreth his father shall have joy in his own children." Those who have not honored their parents often by divine retribution have bad children of their own. The blessing of God is always with a closely united family with members loving each other, doing their best to help everybody in the family. Besides being pleasing to God, without such unity no nation can be strong.

Does the fourth commandment oblige us to respect and to obey others besides our parents? — Besides our parents, the fourth commandment obliges us to respect and to obey all our lawful superiors.

1. *Guardians* take the place of parents. A child owes his guardians the same respect and obedience due his parents.

Teachers, godparents of baptism and confirmation, and elderly persons like grandparents, may be called guardians. All old people are to be respected by the young: "Honor the person of the aged man, and rise up before the hoary head" (Lev. 19:32).

2. *Employees* are bound to respect and obey their superiors. They should be loyal, and careful about the property entrusted to them. *Tutors and nurses* must be especially faithful because to them are entrusted human souls. They must see to it that the children under their care are protected from harm to body and soul.

It is *wrong* of inferiors to carry stories about their superiors back and forth. If they cannot be loyal to their master, they should leave his service.

3. All are obliged to respect and to obey legitimate civil and ecclesiastical *authorities* in lawful discharge of official duties.

"Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities, for there exists no authority except from God, and those who exist have been appointed by God" (Rom. 13:1).

What are our duties towards our ecclesiastical superiors? — We are obliged to render respect, obedience, and support to our ecclesiastical superiors.

1. We should *reverence* our priest and bishop as our fathers in Christ, obey them in spiritual matters, and pray for them. We should contribute to their support according to our means.

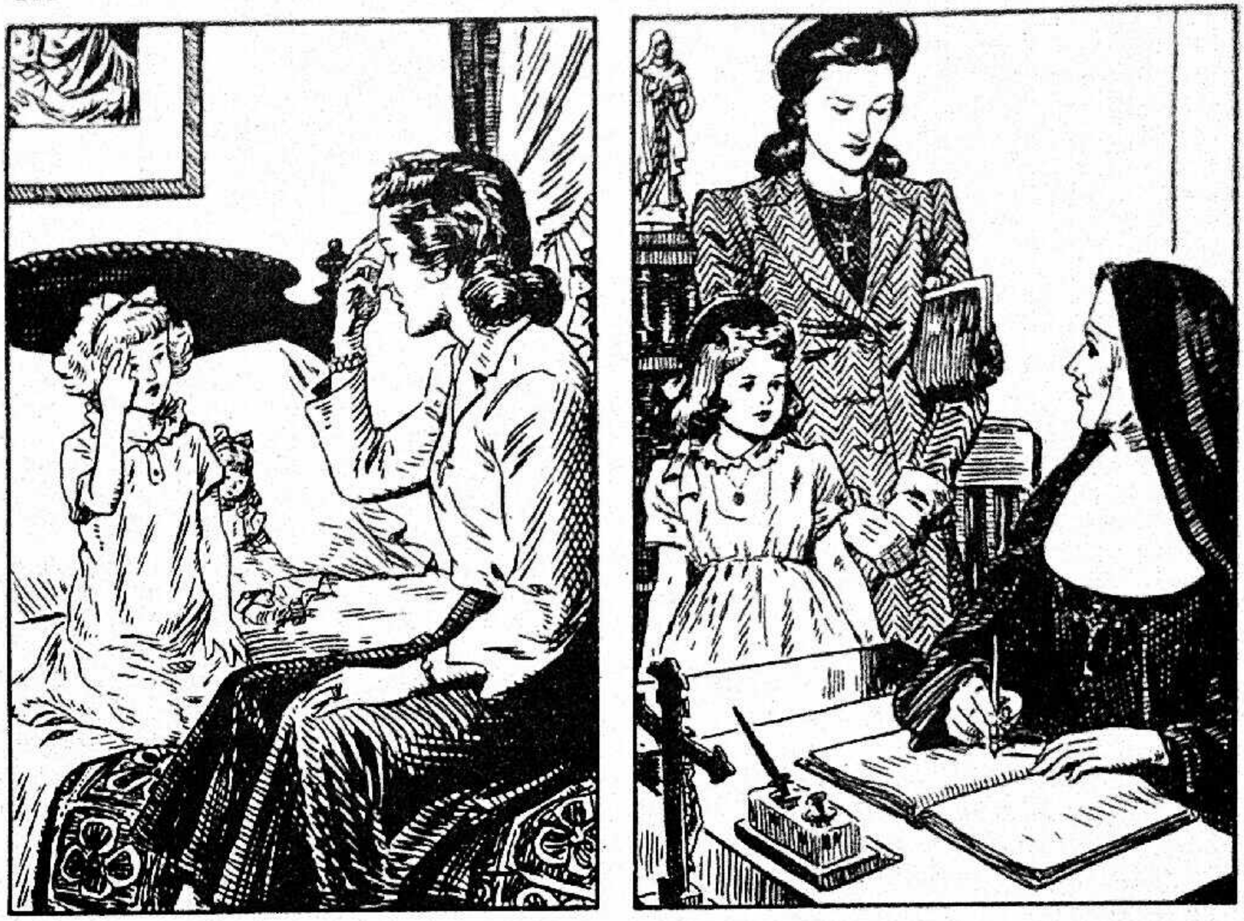
We should appreciate the fact that they sacrifice their time, health, and whole lives for the good of our souls. St. Paul tells us: "Obey your superiors and be subject to them, for they keep watch as having to render an account of your souls" (Heb. 13:17). One offends God gravely if he opposes bishops or priests, speaks ill of them, gossips about them, or neglects to contribute to their support.

2. We must be loyal to the Holy Father and *obey* him in spiritual matters. He is the visible head of the body of Christ, the Church, of which we are the members. We must honor him, respect his authority.

In reverencing the Pope, we but reverence Jesus Christ, whose representative he is. We must assist him in the arduous duties of his office by spiritual and material offerings. Hierarchy and laity, all in the Church, *without exception*, are subject to the Pope, and are bound to yield him perfect obedience in all spiritual matters. We should pray for the Pope, and if we can, give him material help.

3. On their part, *bishops and priests* have the obligation of caring for those under their charge, of teaching them their duties, and helping them lead good lives.

They are bound to pray for their flocks, and to offer Mass on Sundays and holydays for the members of their diocese or parish.



Parents have the duty of beginning their child's religious training as soon as possible.

(1) shows a good mother teaching her child the sign of the cross.

(2) Parents have the duty of sending their child to a Catholic school, whenever one is available. Careless parents have much to answer for before God if they send their child to a non-Catholic school, and the child grows up in ignorance or hatred of the Catholic faith.

103. Duties of Parents

What duty have parents toward their children?—Parents must provide for the spiritual and bodily welfare of their children.

The fourth commandment requires parents to love their children, and care for them in body and soul. Their duties include provision for their children's religious and moral training, bodily needs, education, discipline, manners, etc.

1. ***Parents*** must provide a minor with food and clothing, guard him from sickness and accidents, and give him suitable play and exercise. It is the duty of parents to exercise *personal* supervision, and not leave everything to household help. God gave children to parents, not to nursemaids.

Likewise, those institutions (called nurseries) where even babies may be left all day, however good they may be, and even if they are under the supervision of Sisters, should be resorted to only for grave reasons.

2. It is the duty of Catholic parents to send their child to a Catholic *school*. Secular or non-Catholic schools where the Catholic religion is not taught may be tolerated only when the diocesan bishop gives permission on account of prevailing circumstances.

At home, the parents should supervise the child's studies. They should support the authority of the teacher, in order to teach the child proper respect for authority. It is not edifying for parents to criticise or ridicule the teacher in the child's presence. The evil effects of such conduct on the child can hardly be overestimated.

3. Parents must provide for a child's future by giving him an *education* that will develop his mind and character. They

should also enable him to acquire some training, trade, or profession by which he may later become self-supporting.

Parents who give a child all the food, candy, toys, and clothing he asks for only indulge him, and show *false love*. Girls should be made to dress with modesty. Parents have no obligation to *support* their grown-up children. It is a bad practice to continue supporting older children, for in that way they become lazy, depending on the parents.

How should parents provide moral and religious training?—Parents should begin early to give their child religious training.

1. As soon as the child can speak, he should be taught the ordinary prayers, and told of God and holy things. It is a very praiseworthy custom to have *family prayers*, in which all of the family participate.

A child should be made to say his morning and night prayers regularly. He should be taught his catechism and prepared for Confession and first Holy Communion; he should be made to attend Mass, and perform all his religious duties faithfully.

2. Parents must exercise continual *vigilance*, to guard the child from moral evil.

As the child grows older, he should not be allowed excessive liberty, especially with regard to the company he keeps, and to staying out at night. Parents should always know where the child is, who his companions are, what he reads, what shows he sees.

3. Parents must *correct* the child's faults, taking care not to be either harsh or over-indulgent. They must act with *justice* as well as *mercy*. They must treat all their children equally, and show no favoritism.

Parents who fly into a rage about a fault one day and laugh at the same fault another day can hardly expect their child to respect them. Parents who are too "good" to correct, chide, or punish a child who has committed grave faults are either stupid or lazy. They are bad parents, failing in their duties to God.

4. Parents must give *good example* to the child. Deeds are more powerful than words. If the parents neglect the sacraments, Mass, and other religious duties, they cannot well expect their child to be faithful.

Some parents think that just because they send their child to a good Catholic school, they have no further responsibility over his training. However good a school, God did not give a child into its independent care, but into that of parents. Parents must train their children not only by precept, but chiefly by example. By the fruit the tree is known.

What should be the attitude of parents when their child is grown up?—When their child is grown up, parents should remember that their child is an individual whom God created for His own purposes, and that he has his own rights and privileges.

Parents should help their child accomplish God's purposes as much as they can. They must never be an obstacle to the child, through selfishness or false love. Parents should be most *careful about their attitude* when the child chooses an occupation, and especially when he chooses a state of life.

1. In their child's choice of an *occupation or profession*, parents should act with wisdom and understanding; they should advise, but never force. It happens sometimes that a child shows a strong inclination for a certain study. This should be encouraged, for it is a sign of talent. If the child shows no *special inclination*, a mutual agreement and understanding should prevail.

If the child is strongly attracted to the study of farming or architecture, he should not be forced to become a lawyer, because his father is a lawyer or because his parents wish to boast of a politician-son. How many are failures in their occupations today because their parents forced them into a calling distasteful to them!

2. Many parents out of pure caprice *interfere* with the practice of their child's profession or occupation, by preventing his acceptance of positions, by wishing him to stay home with them, etc.

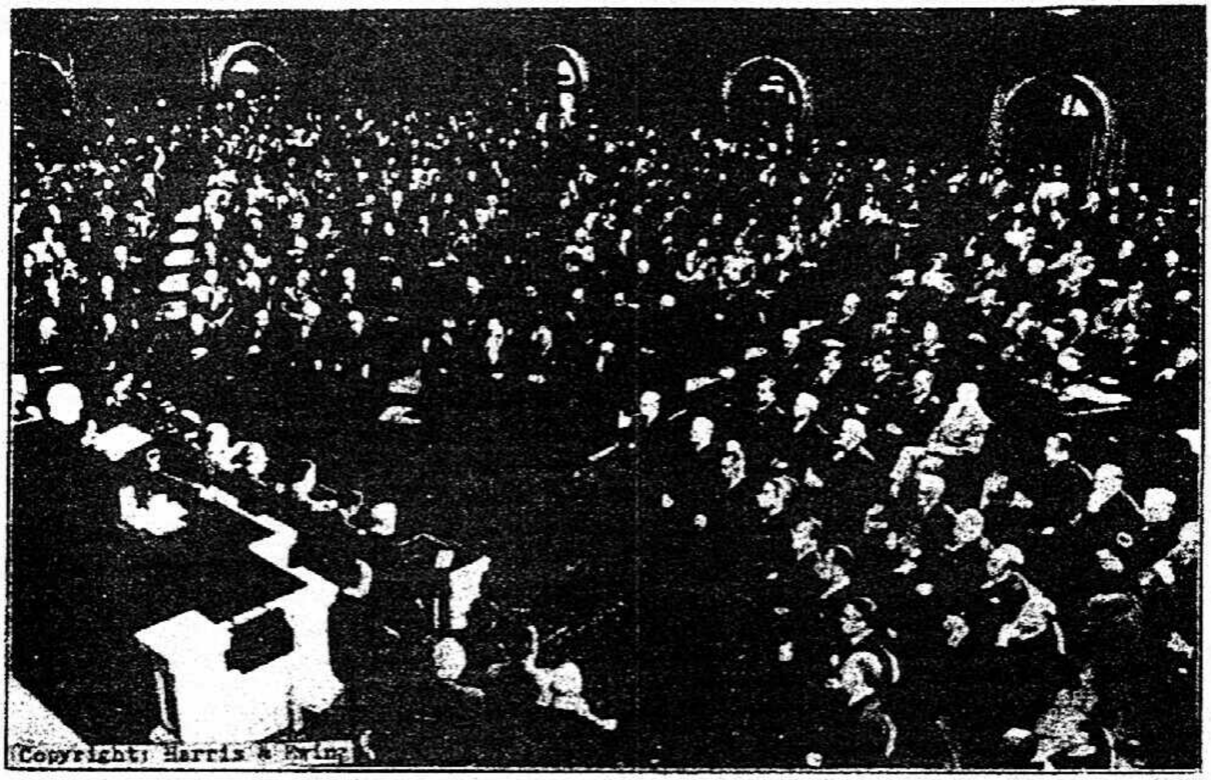
Such parents need not be surprised if they find themselves burdened with the support of their grown-up children and their families. If you cut off the wings of a bird, it cannot fly.

3. In the choice of a *state of life*, which may make or mar the life of their child, parents should advise, but not interfere. If he wishes to marry, and they have any objection to the partner he has chosen, they may state their objections. If the objection is very serious, they may try to prevent the marriage, but never otherwise.

Parents should not be *selfish*. Many are so selfish that, wishing to keep their child to themselves, they can find no one in the whole world satisfactory as a partner for him. Parents should remember that the child is entitled to his own life. When they die, he should be able to exist without them.

4. Parents sin when they *force* their child to marry someone he does not care for.

Parents *must not meddle* in the affairs of their married children. This interference is a frequent source of disagreement betwen couples. Parents must be very careful of their attitude if their child chooses a religious vocation.



Upon being chosen to a public office, an official acquires not only rights, but duties as well. Judges, legislators, and other public officials must treat everybody with equal justice, and must give the best service they can to the people. They are responsible before God for everything that they do, for all the decisions they make. Above is the U. S. President addressing Congress.

104. Duties of Other Superiors

What are the chief duties of those who hold public office?—The chief duties of those who hold public office are: to be just to all in exercising their authority, and to promote the general welfare.

1. Public officials have a grave responsibility before God. The *higher* the post, the *greater* the responsibility. Legislators, members of the cabinet, judges, all office-holders—everybody from the lowest to the highest—will have to give a rigid account to God of all that they have thought, said, done, or omitted, every law passed, every vote given.

"A most severe judgment will be for those who bear rule" (Wisd. 6:6). Those in high office should regard it as merely committed into their care for a short time.

2. No one should strive after a position of authority which he is not competent to fill.

One who aspires to a dignity, to the duties of which he is unequal, is like a baker who tries to man an airship. If, however, a person feels himself competent, and is willing to accept the duties of a post, it is good for him to endeavor to obtain it if thereby he can contribute towards the welfare of others.

3. One on whom honors and positions are conferred should have as his principal thought the accomplishment of the *duties* connected with his position. He must not think much of himself on account of the honor; it makes him no better in God's sight.

Virtue alone gives a man true worth and distinction. Herod was a king; Mary and Joseph were poor laborers. But Mary and Joseph now are very near God, and surely Herod is not so near God. "Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; even as the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve" (Matt. 20:27-28).

4. Public officials must set a *good example* because they occupy a conspicuous position, and because example is better than precept. Officials do more by their example than by their orders and regulations.

Like a city seated on a mountain, public officials cannot be hid. Others quickly imitate them. What a responsibility before God is it for an official to lead an immoral life and thus corrupt numerous young people by his bad example! What a scandal it is for an official to be the first to break the law!

How should public officials promote the general welfare? — Public officials should promote the general welfare by safeguarding the rights of all, passing good and just laws and enforcing these laws impartially, interesting themselves in the spread of good moral customs and religion, and punishing evildoers.

1. Being the representatives of God, public officials should imitate His justice. The *common good,* not the benefit of a single person or group, should be the object.

Civil officials should be ready to sacrifice themselves for the citizens. Christ the Good Shepherd laid down His life for His sheep.

2. Officials must be *impartial.* They must show favor to none, but treat all equally, rich or poor, prominent or unknown. "With God there is no respect of persons" (Rom. 2:11).

Judges must beware of acting unjustly, or of allowing themselves to be corrupted by *bribes.* They must not let the rich and powerful induce them to give unjust judgment. Acceptance of bribes by public officials is a sin against the seventh commandment. "God made the little and the great, and hath equal care of all" (Wis. 6:8).

3. Public officials should particularly provide for the *welfare* of the poor and helpless: the destitute, sick, orphan, and the great body of the working classes.

These less fortunate citizens often have no power to protect themselves. The laws and rulers must therefore safeguard them without, however, injuring the welfare and rights of others.

4. Officials have a serious obligation to promote the ***Christian foundations*** of our Constitution.

They should work to make Christian principles prevail in a Christian country; safeguarding education, respect for the Lord's Day, marriage, etc.

What are the duties of superiors in general?—In general, superiors must provide for the spiritual and material welfare of those over whom they have control.

1. ***Employers*** should be considerate of their inferiors. They must not oppress their employees, nor keep back their wages, nor exploit them in any way.

Oppression of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, and defrauding laborers of their wages, are sins that *cry to heaven* for vengeance. Some employers make their people work in unhealthy and overcrowded rooms; they hardly give them any time for rest and for their meals; they require of them more work than they can do.

2. Employers should give their employees a *living wage;* that is, enough for them and their families to live on decently. They should allow them ample facilities for fulfilling religious duties.

They should look after their health, watch over their morals, attend to their religious instruction if they are Catholics. (*For other duties of employers see pages 230-231.*)

What does the fourth commandment forbid?—The fourth commandment forbids disrespect, unkindness, and disobedience to our parents and lawful superiors.

1. *Disrespect* includes all irreverence and stubbornness against lawful authority. One offends against the respect due his parents when he talks back at them, refuses their correction, ridicules them or strikes them.

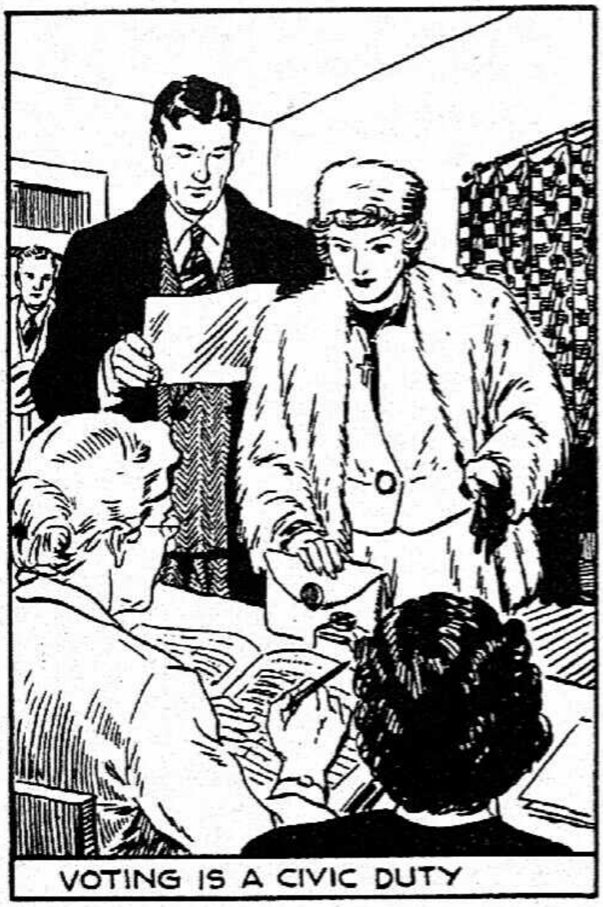
One who thinks and acts as if he were "superior" to his parents is a disgraceful snob. For even if a son or daughter has graduated with highest honors from the best university in the world, he still owes his parents due respect as God's representatives.

2. Contempt and *unkindness* are contrary to the love we owe our parents. One offends against the love due his parents if he curses them, despises them, hates them, grieves them, or makes them angry.

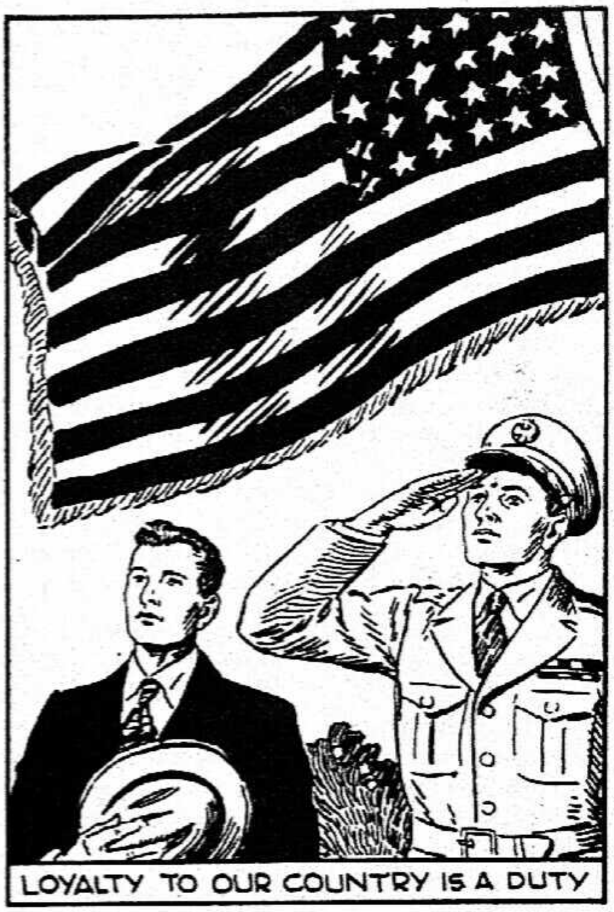
Children at times speak sharply and insultingly to their parents. We should recoil in shame before doing this. Even if we only think of what our parents have done for us, the continuous and unending sacrifices they have made, we should burn our tongue out before we speak contemptuously to them. "He that curseth his father or mother, dying let him die" (Lev. 20:9).

3. Children may sin against obedience either by refusing or neglecting to do what is commanded, or by doing what is forbidden. Showing *unwillingness* is also a form of disobedience.

A young child is *disobedient* if he neglects his studies, goes with forbidden companions, goes out without permission, etc. Older children disobey by attending forbidden shows or dances, going out with forbidden companions or at forbidden times, concealing their earnings from their parents, etc.


VOTING IS A CIVIC DUTY

1. Among the civic duties is that of voting. All who are granted this right should exercise it. They must not prostitute their right, but use it justly for the good of all.


LOYALTY TO OUR COUNTRY IS A DUTY

2. It is the duty of every citizen to be loyal to his country, to support its institutions, and to respect its laws and its flag. A good Catholic is a good citizen.

105. Civic Duties

What are the duties of a citizen toward his country? – A citizen must love his country, be sincerely interested in its welfare, and respect and obey its lawful authority.

God gave us our country, and we show Him our gratitude by rendering it our love and service. Love is shown not by words, but by actions. But true love of country is always subject to the law of Him who gave us our country.

How does a citizen show a sincere interest in his country's welfare? – A citizen shows a sincere interest in his country's welfare by voting honestly and without selfish motives, by paying just taxes, and by defending his country's rights when necessary.

1. We are *responsible* to God for the men we elect to office, for He has permitted us to have the right and duty to select the men we want. Every one who has the right to vote has likewise *a serious obligation to use that right properly*. Electors must choose men of experience and Christian principles. If we elect men with no religious principles, we should not be surprised if later in office they turn out unsatisfactory.

It is wrong *to sell* one's vote; it is selling one's convictions. Persons who buy votes are not likely to use the office they might thereby gain for the good of anyone else but themselves.

2. Every Catholic who has the right to vote should *exercise that right*. Matters closely connected with the life of the people are the constant subject of legislation or debate. Even if your vote does not enable the good candidate to win, at least it will

lessen the margin of his defeat. A Catholic elector who gives his vote to a candidate hostile to Christian principles, or by abstaining from voting contributes towards the success of such a candidate, has much to answer for.

It is the Catholic voter's duty to vote for candidates that will act justly in questions of morals, and have the Christian principles at heart. Those who do not have the right to vote ought to *pray* for a result in the election favorable to upright men and the country in general.

3. A Catholic elector *must not vote* for any candidate who despises the teachings of Christianity. Before voting, he should find out the candidate's views on education, marriage, etc.

It may happen that all the candidates for an office are indifferent or hostile to religion. In that case, if no other candidate can be made available, the Catholic should vote for the one least hostile to Christian principles, most moral in his qualities.

4. We are bound to contribute towards the expenses of government *by paying taxes*. It is wrong to cheat the State in the matter of taxation.

It is only just that the citizens should contribute towards the maintenance of peace, order, good works, the army, etc. Our Lord Himself paid taxes (Matt. 17:26). It is only just that we should help support the government that secures us protection.

5. In case of a *just war*, men should be ready to render military service for the defense of their country.

A war of conquest in which the just rights of other peoples are overidden is not just. Those who during wartime offer their lives for the defense of their homeland will receive an eternal reward if they are in God's grace.

Why must we respect and obey the lawful authority of our country?—We must respect and obey the lawful authority of our country because it comes from God, the Source of all authority.

1. God has entrusted the maintenance of peace and order in human society to the *secular authorities*. It is His will that among so many some should rule and the others be subject to that rule, for law and order.

"By God kings reign and lawgivers decree just things" (Prov. 8:15). "There exists no authority except from God" (Rom. 13:1). "Be subject . . . whether to the king as supreme, or to governors as sent through him . . . for such is the will of God" (1 Pet. 2:13-15).

2. Our *civil rulers* or superiors are those who have authority in the government. We call them *civil officials*. Most of our officials obtain their offices by the vote of qualified electors. Therefore if we get a bad government, it is our own fault.

Our civil officials are the President, Senators, Representatives, Justices of the Supreme Court and other judges, governors, mayors, etc. Others, such as sheriffs, policemen, etc. are also civil officials.

3. We should be *loyal* to our civil officials, obey their just laws, and pray for them. We are bound to obey just laws, because all lawful authority comes from God (Rom. 13:1-7). We are not bound to obey *unjust* and *wicked* laws. Laws contrary to divine law, opposed to the law of God, cannot be just. If, therefore, we are commanded to do what God forbids, or to desist from doing what He commands, we "must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

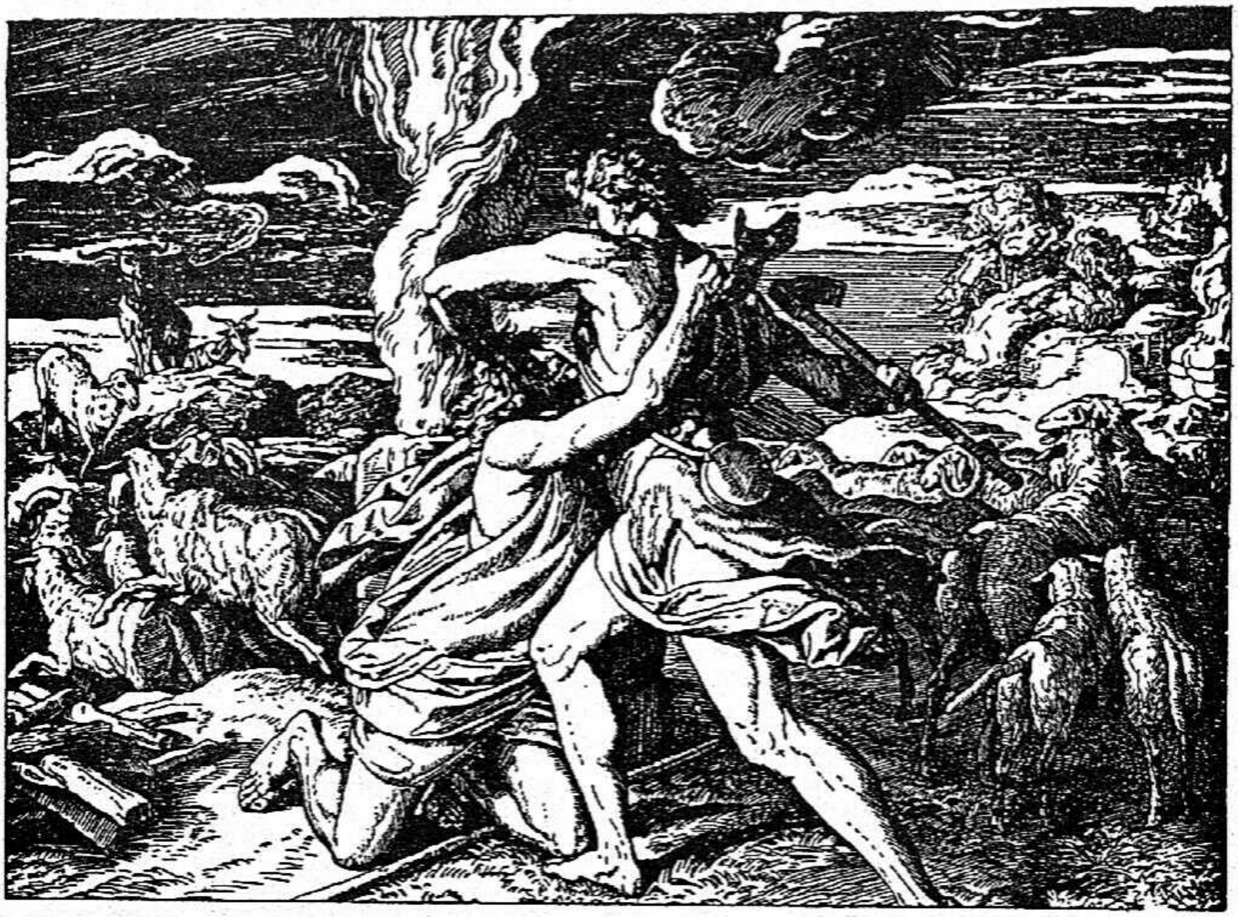
We should pray for our civil superiors, as St. Paul urges us: "I urge therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings, and for all in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and worthy behavior" (1 Tim. 2:1-2). We have a serious obligation towards our civil officials even if they are not the ones that we voted for. If God permitted them to obtain the post, we *must render them support*.

4. It is a sin to *plot against* our government and country. Treason is a crime against God and our fellowmen. We are bound to love our country and defend it against all its enemies, within and without.

"Therefore he who resists the authority resists the ordinance of God; and they that resist bring on themselves condemnation" (Rom. 13:2).

Why are we obliged to take an active part in works of good citizenship?—We are obliged to take an active part in works of good citizenship, because right reason requires citizens to work together for the public welfare of the country.

The citizens of a State are mutually dependent: the welfare of all depends on the active contribution made by all. A country is like an anthill: all the members should be working, to increase the food store, to protect the hill from the weather and from enemies, etc. Those who take no interest in the work of the nation are dead weights that the others must bear; they contribute nothing to the welfare of the country in which they live. It is in a State where the citizens have no interest that evil men get into the public service in order to loot it, and enrich themselves at the expense of the public.



The first murder on earth was committed by Cain when he slew Abel. "And Cain said to Abel his brother: Let us go forth abroad. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and slew him. And the Lord said to Cain: Where is thy brother Abel? And he answered: I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:8-9). Murderers do not act as brothers of the murdered.

106. The Fifth Commandment

"Thou shalt not kill."

What are we commanded by the fifth commandment? — By the fifth commandment we are commanded to take proper care of our own spiritual and bodily well-being and that of our neighbor.

Sins included in his commandment are many, such as: murder, suicide, anger, fighting, hatred, scandal and bad example.

What is murder?—Murder is the voluntary and unjust killing of a human being.

1. Murder is a great sin. A murderer violates the *rights of God* over human life, and, besides taking a life, robs his victim of the opportunity to gain merits for heaven, and prepare himself for death.

God created man, and has supreme dominion over life. "You know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).

2. The direct intention to kill an *innocent person* is always forbidden, as against this commandment, whether it be by public or private authority. And the human body may not be *mutilated* unless that were the only way to preserve the health or save a life. Also, since violation of the body is forbidden except to save life or health, anyone performing sterilization commits grave sin.

However sick a person may be, and even at his own request, to relieve him of pain, no one, not even the government itself, may take his life. Some would propagate the idea of *euthanasia,* what they term "mercy killing", a direct and deliberate killing of those in great pain, of the defective, moronic, or otherwise incapacitated. Such "mercy killers" are murderers, who usurp the rights of God over life.

3. A *mother* bearing a child should be very careful to protect and preserve the life of her child. As the soul is created at the very moment of conception, anything wilfully done which results in the death of even an unborn child is *murder*.

Not even to save the mother's life may an unborn child be killed by direct *abortion*. If the death of the child results secondarily, in an attempt to save the mother's life, and after all precautions have been taken to safeguard the child, this is indirect abortion, and is permitted, for grave cause. In the United States one pregnancy out of three ends in abortion.

4. It is lawful to kill *animals* for food, because God has given them for the use of man. The fifth commandment forbids the killing only of human beings. God Himself commanded the killing of animals for sacrifice, after having given this commandment.

It is our duty to care for animals, refrain from tormenting them, and from killing any useful animal without reason; but we must not lavish on them exaggerated affection, as if they were idols.

When is it lawful to take another's life?—It is lawful to take another's life:

1. In *self-defense,* or the defense of another unjustly attacked. A woman may kill, to protect herself against criminal assault. One may defend life or property against enemies, going so far as to kill.

One, however, may not do more than what is needed for defense; if wounding an assailant is sufficient, it would be wrong to kill him. One is not justified to kill in order to protect property of *trifling* value. Setting a trap *to kill* a chicken thief is murder.

2. In executing *criminals* condemned by legitimate authority. Society must protect itself from crime, and may through constituted authority order a sentence of death.

Private persons and mobs have no right to put anyone to death. *Lynching is murder.*

3. In a *just war*. A nation has the right to exist and protect itself. It is lawful for it to repel by force those seeking to destroy it, and thus to defend its rights in a grave matter. Nations may also assist other nations unjustly attacked, or whose rights are encroached upon.

War, however, is an evil which must not be embarked upon except as a last resort. Nations have a tendency to regard their particular side as just, even when it may not be.

What is anger?—Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure, combined with a desire to punish the offender.

1. Anger is contrary to the spirit of Christ, Who is meek and humble of heart. We must take care not to hurt or wound *another's feelings*. If we fall into the misfortune of doing so, we must apologize or make amends in some other way. "Do not let the sun go down upon your anger" (Eph. 4:26).

Anger often arises from pride or envy. Those who think much of themselves get angry at every supposed slight or injury. They should remember Christian charity, and fear these words: "Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment" (Matt. 5:22).

2. Unjust anger leads to *fighting*, hatred, quarrelling, cursing, mockery, revenge, and other grave sins, may even end in murder.

What is hatred?—Hatred is strong dislike of or ill-will towards anyone.

1. Hatred is a kind of *habitual anger*. One who hates sees no good in the person hated, and would like to see evil rain down on that person, who then becomes an enemy.

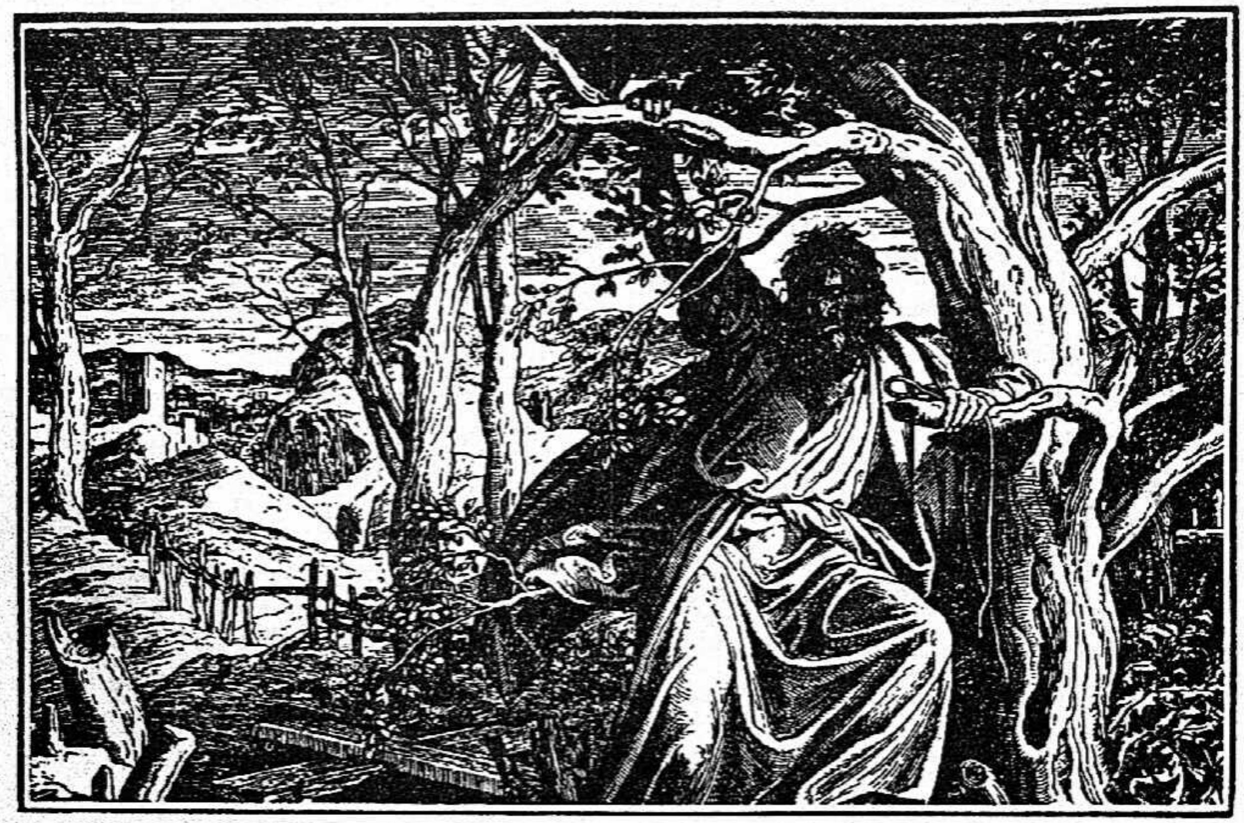
If we hate certain qualities of a person, but have no antagonism towards the person himself, our feeling is not necessarily sinful. It is not hatred to detest the evil qualities of others; we must *hate the sin*, but not the sinner. We must be careful, however, not to commit rash judgment, regarding qualities, as we cannot know all circumstances; let us have charity towards all.

2. *Hatred* is a sin because he who hates another violates the commandment of God, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15).

What is the sin of revenge?—The sin of revenge is the desire to inflict immoderate and unjust punishment on someone who has injured us, from a motive of anger.

When serious, revenge is *vengeance,* a sin against charity and justice, most sinful and unChristian. However much we are injured, we have no right to take the law into our hands.

St. Paul said, "Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath, for it is written: Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). "He that shall seek to revenge himself shall find vengeance from the Lord" (Deut. 32:35).



After betraying Our Lord, Judas fell into despair. "Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priest, and the elders, saying: 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.' But they said 'What is that to us? See to it thyself.' And he flung the pieces of silver into the temple, and withdrew; and went away and hanged himself with a halter" (Matt. 27:3-5). If Judas had repented, instead of despairing, and had asked pardon, Our Lord would have forgiven him, as He forgave the good thief.

107. Caring for Our Health and Life

What are our duties respecting our health and life?—We have the obligation to preserve our health and life.

1. Man has *no right* to encroach upon God's dominion over life; man created no human being, and he may not kill any human being, not even his own self. Our body is *not our own;* it belongs to God. We are bound to take care of it, and to do with it not what we wish, but what God wills. God created our body as an *abode* for our immortal soul.

Very often the condition of the body affects that of the soul. If the body is unhealthy, the soul suffers. There is a wise Roman proverb: "*A healthy mind in a healthy body.*" However, we are not obliged to employ unusual means involving great expense, or extraordinary suffering.

2. We must exercise prudence in *preserving* our health and that of those under our care. Prudence would imply cleanliness, temperance, regularity, industry, and the use of remedies during sickness.

Driving a car at excessive *speed*, crossing the tracks when a train is approaching, playing with loaded firearms, jumping into or out of a car when it is in motion, hanging on the running board of a car, etc., are imprudent actions.

3. We have the obligation to do nothing which tends to *injure* or *destroy* health or life. It injures health to indulge to excess in drinking, smoking, dancing at all hours, eating unwholesome food, and vanity in dress.

Some women and girls are gravely responsible for not eating proper food out of a desire *to keep thin* and thus be more pleasing in the eyes of others, to the injury of their health. Some men and boys form the vice of *drunkenness*, taking so much of intoxicants as to lose their reason.

Why is drunkenness a sin?—Drunkenness is a sin because it injures the health, and often leads to other sins.

"Let us walk becomingly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as for the flesh, take no thought for its lusts" (Rom. 13:13).

1. By drunkenness one deliberately benumbs without just cause his *reason*, a precious gift from God to man.

St. Paul said: "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are . . . enmities, . . . drunkenness, carousings, and suchlike. And concerning these I warn you, as I have warned you, that they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

2. When committed publicly, drukenness occasions bad example and *scandal*, and has often promoted fights and even murder. By habitual drinking, a person not only injures his health, but neglects the support of his family, and not unlikely also fails in his obligations to the State and to God.

Drunkenness is a form of slow suicide; drunkards do not live long. They shorten the life God gave them in order to give in to their unworthy appetites. If a man would only sit down and reason the matter out, he would never submit to the vice of drunkenness, which does not make him either praised or loved by God or his fellow-men.

What is suicide?—Suicide is the deliberate taking of one's own life.

1. Suicide is a great sin: it is *self-murder*. The Church denies Christian burial to those who knowingly take their own life. By this the Church does not mean that those souls are surely condemned to hell. Their judgment is in the hands of God. The Church merely wishes to show *public condemnation* of such sins.

One who commits suicide sins against God, Who is the exclusive arbiter of life or death; he sins against himself, by plunging his soul mercilessly into hell; and he sins against his family, whom he leaves to bear his shame, and perhaps to live in want for lack of his support.

2. Suicide is the result of *lack of religion*. Experience teaches that as religion weakens in a land, the number of suicides increases. Suicide is usually committed by one who has gotten into trouble or committed some great sin.

If we get into trouble, we should have patience and trust in God. Some commit suicide because they lose their fortunes; others because of business failures; and still others because they cannot bear disappointments.

3. Suicide is the sin of those in *despair*, who do not believe or hope in God's mercy and ability to carry them through all adversities. Suicide is a sin of Judas.

The suicide no longer holds that God *forgives* anything and everything when a sinner repents. He no longer holds that God is infinitely merciful, and infinitely powerful, that He can draw good out of the most horrible evils.

4. If one committed great sins, the remedy is not to commit suicide, but to *repent*. The thing to do is not to hang or shoot or poison oneself, but to cling to God in sincere sorrow.

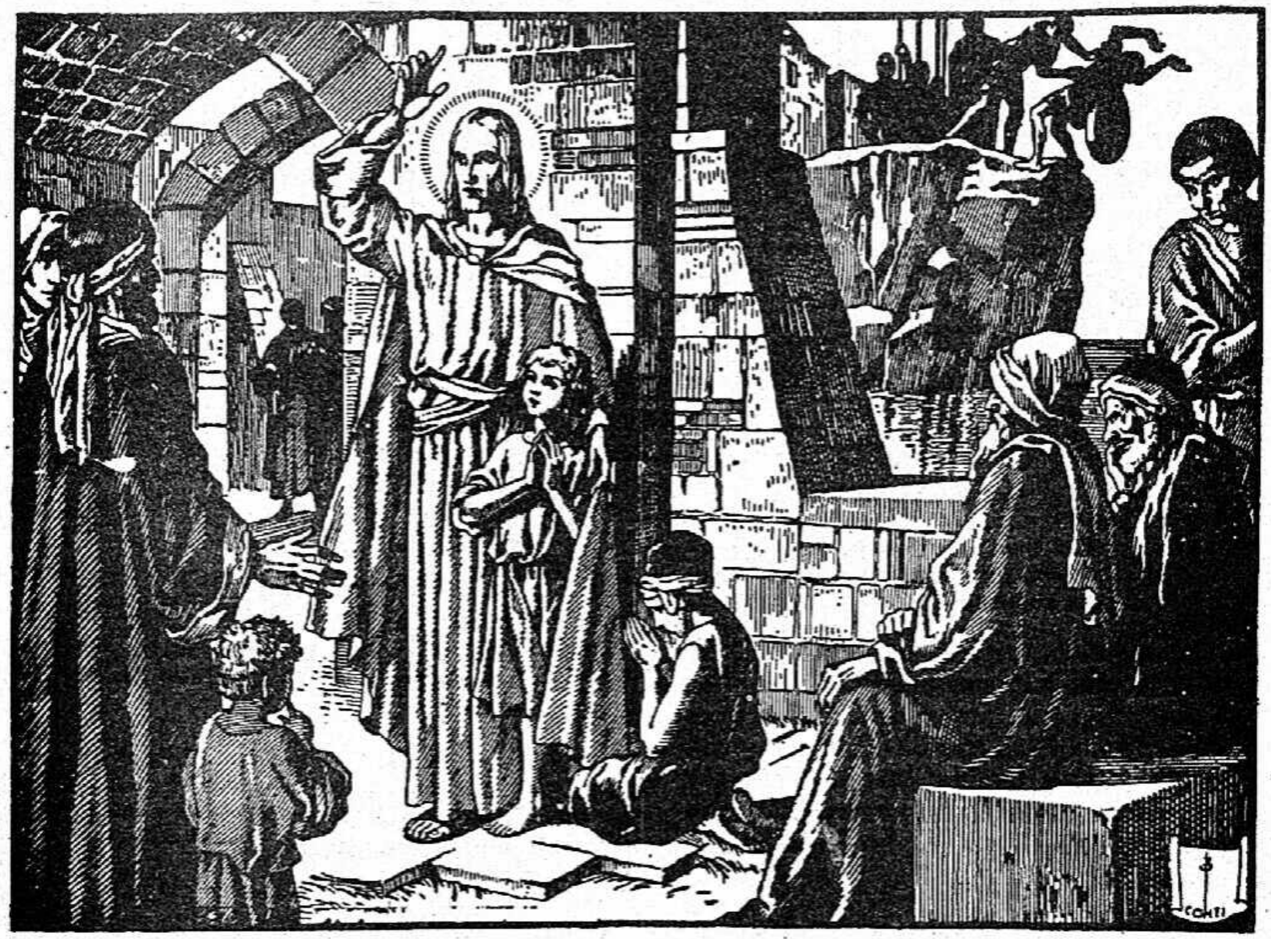
Even if one has to suffer contempt and disgrace in this life for his sins, he will only be preparing his soul for heaven. But if he commits suicide, he will only be preparing it for the torments of hell.

5. A *duel* is a combat carried out by agreement between two persons, fought with deadly weapons, usually before witnesses called seconds. Duelling is nothing else but *suicide* and *murder* combined. A Catholic is bound to refuse to fight a duel. Christian burial is denied to those who are killed in a duel.

The duellist is guilty of a *double murder:* he intends to kill his antagonist, and he risks his own life. The Church excommunicates those who challenge or accept a challenge to a duel, the seconds, and all who sanction a duel by their presence.

6. It is not wrong, but *highly meritorious*, to endanger our health and life in order to gain everlasting lif., or to rescue our fellow-men from physical or spiritual death. Christ Himself knowingly gave His life to save souls.

Martyrs, priests and missionaries who expose their lives, doctors and nurses who attend contagious cases, merit an *eternal reward*. Those who lose their lives rescuing others from drowning or burning, deserve renown. "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather be afraid of him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake, will find it" (Matt. 10:39).



Christ said, concerning scandalizing children: "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it were better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals! For it must needs be that scandals come, but woe to the man through whom scandal does come!" (Matt. 18:6-7).

108. Bad Example and Scandal

What is bad example?—Bad example is doing wrong in the presence of others.

1. Bad example is the principal occasion of ***scandal,*** which is occasioning the sin of another by any word or deed having at least the appearance of evil. If any help or encouragement is given in any way to cause another to do wrong, scandal is committed or given.

Bad example and scandal are sins against the soul included in the Fifth Commandment. They injure our neighbor's soul, and so are worse evils than injuring his body. They do the devil's work and draw souls into hell. If by deliberate scandal and bad example we cause another to commit a grave sin, we are worse than murderers. One who hurts or destroys the spiritual life of his neighbor commits the sin of murder. St. Augustine said, "If thou persuade thy neighbor to sin, thou art his murderer."

2. *Our Lord* condemned scandal in no uncertain terms, saying: "Woe to the man through whom scandal does come! And if thy hand or thy foot is an occasion of sin to thee, cut it off and cast it from thee! It is better for thee to enter life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire" (Matt. 18:7-8).

Grievous indeed must scandal be, to make our gentle Lord use such strong words of condemnation. "The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all scandals and those who work iniquity, and cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:41-42).

3. Some *ways* of giving bad example or scandal are: by indecent talk, by selling or circulating bad books or pictures, by singing improper songs, by dressing immodestly,

by appearing in public in a state of drunkenness, by profanity and cursing, by doing servile work publicly on Sunday, by behaving indecorously in church, by ridiculing religion and priests, by writing against religion, by publicly violating one of the commandments of God or the Church, etc.

We should be very careful in our actions, however innocent, so that they may not be the cause of scandal to others. "And if thy eye is an occasion of sin to thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee! It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into the hell of fire" (Matt. 18:9).

4. By committing scandalous acts a person *influences* others to do the same. This is specially true of children, who easily imitate their parents and elders. He who gives scandal is like a man who digs a pit into which others fall, break their necks.

Parents who quarrel in the presence of their children, however great the provocation, set them a bad example, and commit scandal. *Public officials* who break the law by gambling or immorality give scandal. *Older brothers* who go to forbidden shows and other places, or take their younger brothers with them are guilty of scandal. *Older sisters* who are excessively vain in their toilettes give bad example to their younger sisters.

5. We should avoid giving scandal as far as possible. We even ought to abstain from *good actions* of counsel if they may give scandal. For example, if one is dispensed from abstinence on account of bad health, he should refrain from eating meat before others, in order to prevent their being scandalized. Otherwise, he should explain why he eats the meats.

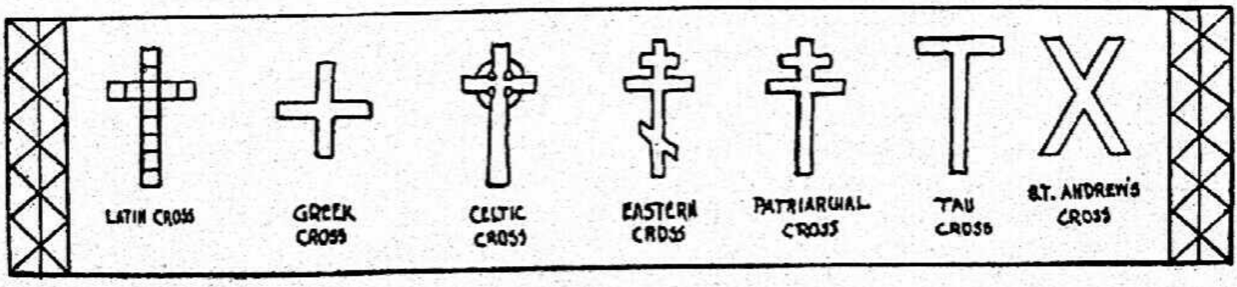
The aged Eleazar *preferred* to die rather than give the mere appearance that he was eating swine's flesh, which was forbidden by the Law. He feared to scandalize young persons, who might think he had gone over to the ranks of the heathen (2 Mach. 6:24).

What must we do if we have been the occasion of scandal or bad example?—If we have been the occasion of scandal or bad example, we are bound to repair the mischief done.

A public scandal must be repaired in a public manner. Even then we usually cannot begin to repair the greater part of the evil we have caused.

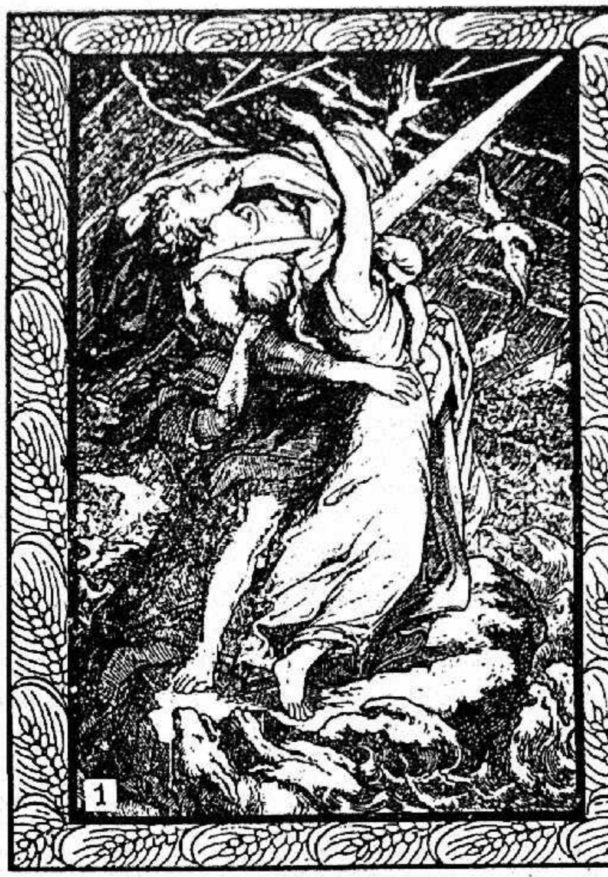
We must try our best to save those we have scandalized from the effects of our example. We must perform the contrary virtue, incite them by good example, and pray for them. We ought to be more careful about giving scandal, because of the difficulty, nay, almost the *impossibility*, of repairing the effects of scandal.

The Cross

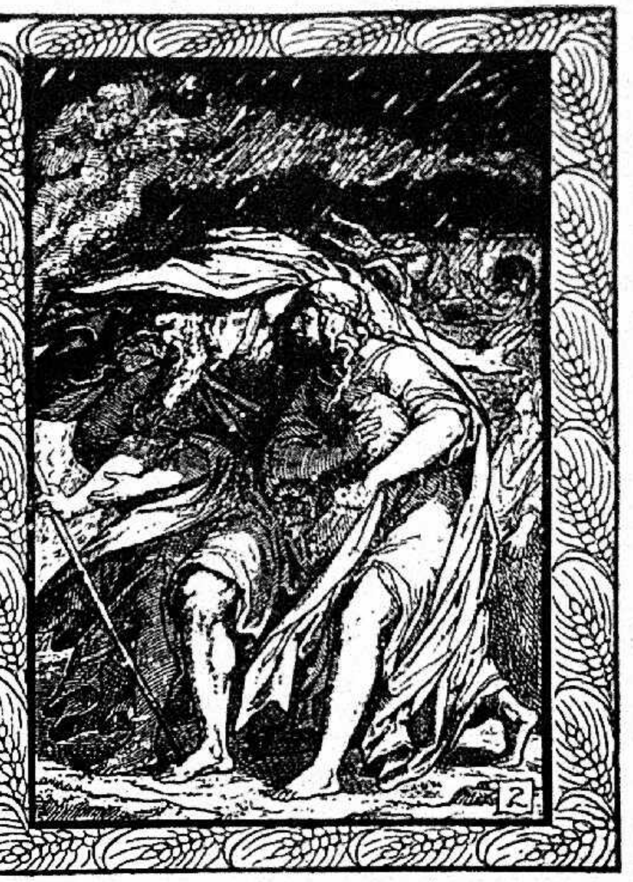


The ***crucifix*** is a symbol of the Redemption, and of Christianity in general. The crucifix differs from a cross, in that it has on it an image of Christ's body. Every home should have a crucifix displayed in a prominent place. The symbol INRI at the top of the crucifix is made up of the first letters of the Latin inscription meaning Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews. Pontius Pilate ordered this inscription on a tablet placed on the cross over Jesus' head. It was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

Most common forms of the cross are: the Latin cross, the Greek cross, the tau cross, the Celtic cross, and the archiepiscopal or patriarchal cross. The Latin cross is the most common, what we almost always see. The Greek cross has four arms of equal length. The tau cross resembles the letter T; it is called "tau" because that is the Greek word for our letter T. The Celtic cross has the arms connected by a circle. The archiepiscopal or patriarchal cross has two cross bars. Another variety, called St. Andrew's cross, is in the form of the letter X, and is so called because the Apostle Andrew was put to death on such a cross.



God punishes the sin of impurity very severely even here on earth. For that sin He destroyed all living things except those in the ark of Noe during the great deluge. "And God seeing that the wickedness of men was great said: I will destroy man" (Gen. 6).



For the same sin God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha: "And the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrha brimstone and fire" (Gen. 19). Today the site of these cities is covered by the Dead Sea, an everpresent reminder of the evil of impurity.

109. The Sixth and Ninth Commandments

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife."

What are we commanded by the sixth and ninth commandments?—By the sixth commandment we are commanded to be pure and modest in our behavior; by the ninth, in thought and in desire.

"Do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you? . . . Glorify God, and bear him in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). "Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from carnal desires which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

1. The sixth and ninth commandments are studied together because they both deal with commands about purity. The sixth commandment refers to *external* acts, and the ninth to wilful *thoughts* and *desires.*

"Oh how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory! For the memory thereof is immortal, because it is known both with God and with men" (Wis. 4:1-2). "The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor. 6:13).

2. God has always shown special love for those whose *chastity* is outstanding. Consider how He chose that purest of all mortals, the Blessed Virgin, as His Mother.

Our Lord chose St. John, the virgin Apostle, as the Beloved Disciple; it was John who was privileged to lean on His Heart at the Last Supper; it was to him that Christ entrusted His Mother.

What does the sixth commandment forbid?—The sixth commandment forbids all impurity and immodesty in words, looks, and actions, whether alone or with others.

To distinguish between the virtues of "purity" and "modesty," let us say that *purity* regulates the expression of the rights of the married and excludes them outside the married state; while *modesty* is a form of temperance which inclines one to refrain from what may lead to unlawful pleasure.

1. This commandment forbids *adultery,* which is the unfaithfulness of a married person. It is a duty before God and men for married people to be true to each other. Adultery is a great evil which breaks up the harmony of the family, and brings punishments in this life and the next.

Adultery is a sin not only against chastity, but also against justice; because it is injustice towards the spouse of the married person. In the Old Law the adulterer was punished with death. "For God will judge the immoral and adulterers" (Heb. 13:4). Married people should be most careful in avoiding even the appearance of unfaithfulness; when the spirit of jealousy enters, conjugal happiness goes out.

2. Matrimony is a holy state, through which Almighty God intends the *propagation* of the race. Actions in accordance with this purpose of matrimony are permitted to the married, but *positively* forbidden to the unmarried. *Fornication* is at all times a grave sin.

By "the married" is meant those Catholics validly married in the Catholic Church. Catholics who marry before a justice of the peace or a non-Catholic minister, cannot live together as married people, because they are *not married* either in the eyes of the Church or before God. If those Catholics who are not married before a Catholic priest live together and have children, these are considered *illegitimate,* and are so registered at Baptism.

3. All impure and immodest actions, whether committed alone or with others, are forbidden. When *impurity* is committed deliberately, it is always a mortal sin.

The gravity of the sin of immodesty varies according to its nature, the conditions, and the relationship of the persons committing it. A good rule would be to refrain from doing anything you would be ashamed to have your pure mother or chaste daughter know you do.

What are the most common occasions of the sin against chastity?—The most common occasions are:

1. *Idleness.* This is the parent of sin. Man is like the earth: if it is not planted to good seed, weeds grow on it fast. So a person is beset by all kinds of evil temptations unless he has some worthwhile occupation.

Thieves break into a house where everybody is paralyzed by idleness. When iron is not used, it begins to rust. And so man, who was made to be active, stagnates and becomes foul when nothing occupies him all day.

2. *Bad companions and conversations.* Bad companions are the cause for the fall into impurity of numberless young people.

We should carefully avoid persons whose conversation is unchaste. Those who take pleasure in listening to improper conversation run a serious risk of falling into sins of impurity.

3. *Too free companionship* with the other sex. Undue familiarity between opposite sexes inflames the passions, just as straw blazes up when brought near the fire. Girls and young women certainly know that if they want to be respected, they must respect themselves, and not permit men to be caressing them at all times.

A kiss is a demonstration of affection, and there is nothing intrinsically wrong with it; but it becomes sinful when used in such a manner as to provoke the passions. This is true also of other demonstrations, like embracing, etc. Undue familiarity rubs off the delicacy from girls, and the protective and gallant instinct from boys.

4. *Immoral books, magazines, and newspapers.* Many are in attractive garb, but enkindle the passions and do harm.

Today we have the National Organization for Decent Literature, and may be guided by its advice.

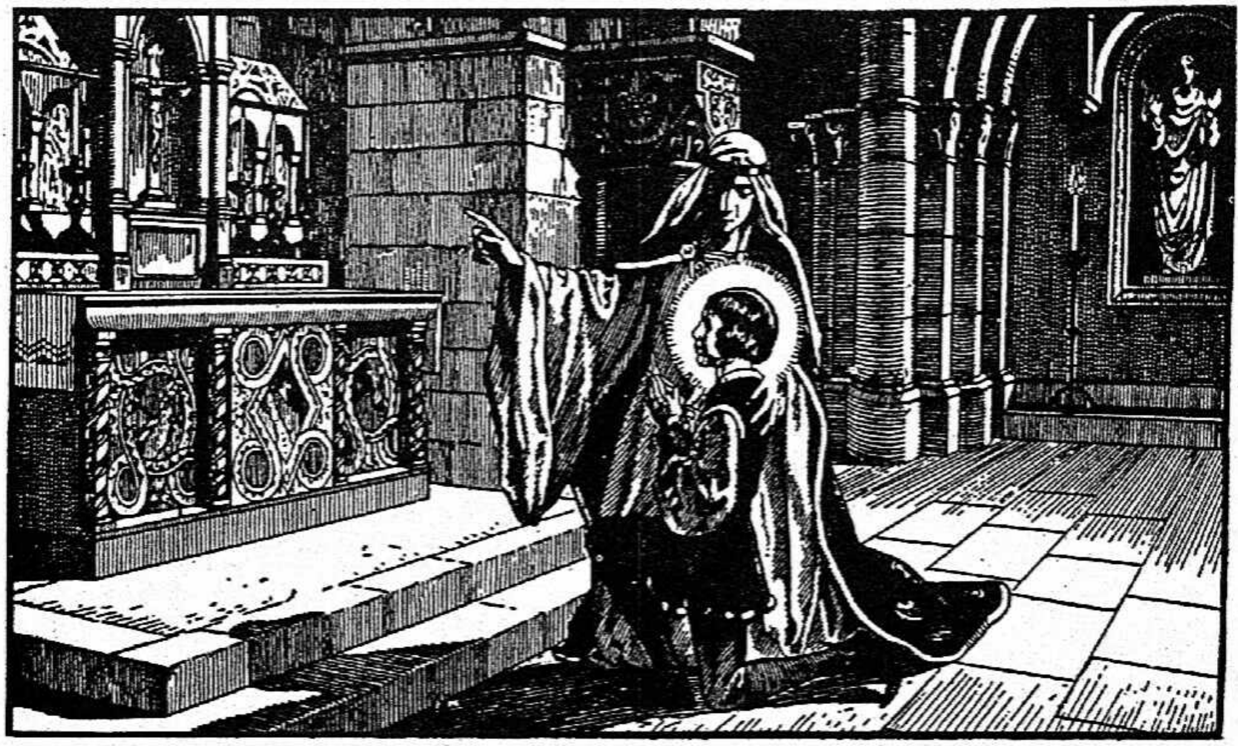
5. *Indecent shows, pictures, games.* Bad shows, whether on the stage or in the films, corrupt more subtly than immoral conversation, because what one sees leaves a stronger impression. Moreover, bad shows represent evil in attractive garb.

By attending only shows approved by the National Legion of Decency, we not only avoid bad shows, but compel producers to make good ones.

6. *Immoral dances.* In itself, dancing is not a reprehensible practice; it is the manner that should be carefully guarded. At bad dances there are often women present who are very immodestly dressed. There is a further danger of excessive drinking.

A modern curse associated with bad dances is the fad of boys and girls going out alone in cars and driving to roadhouses. This can be a source of danger.

7. *Immodesty and excessive luxury in dress.* A beautifully dressed girl is pleasing to look at. But the "art of looking nice" should not be indulged in to excess. Women whose aim in life is to deck themselves in order to attract the attention of men are putting themselves in the way of unchastity.



The illustration shows the holy queen Blanche of France and her young son, later St. Louis, King of France. From babyhood the queen brought up her son in the love of God. She used to say to him over and over that she would rather see him dead than have him commit sin. She guarded him particularly, so that he grew up chaste in body and soul.

All mothers should imitate Queen Blanche; the training she gave helped her son in living a pure and holy life, and in becoming a great saint.

110. Sinful Desires Against Chastity

What is forbidden by the ninth commandment?—The ninth commandment forbids all thoughts and desires contrary to chastity.

"You have heard that it was said to the ancients, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say to you that anyone who even looks with lust at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28).

An impure *desire* is the wish or intention to do something unchaste or impure. Almost always, sins against purity, thoughts and desires as well as acts, are grave or mortal sins. Whenever we are beset by temptation, we should immediately pray, especially to our beloved Mother, the purest of mortals.

An impure desire, however, is a venial sin if committed through lack of attention or reflection, through negligence or slowness in rejecting a thought, or by giving only a partial consent. Only full and deliberate consent makes a sin mortal.

Are mere thoughts about impure things always sinful in themselves? — Mere thoughts about impure things are not always sinful in themselves, but such thoughts are dangerous.

1. It is a *mistake* to suppose that all impure thoughts and desires are sinful. We are not responsible for the wicked thoughts that enter our mind unless we bring them in ourselves. But as far as we can we should try to avoid all such thoughts, by occupying ourselves in something useful. Thinking about impure things is dangerous because in that way we walk on the brink of the abyss of sin, and any little push may throw us in.

Thinking often of something makes us used to that thing; we are in danger of losing our fear of impurity by familiarizing ourselves with thoughts of impure things.

2. A *mere temptation* to impurity, even when accompanied by bodily feeling, is not sinful unless there is wilful consent, at least to some degree. The stronger the tempta-

tion, the more merit we gain if we are faithful and resist. *No matter how long* the temptation lasts, even if it lasts our whole life, as long as we give it no consent, we are free from sin.

St. Catherine of Siena was once severely tempted against purity. Shortly after Our Lord appeared to her. She asked, "Where wert Thou, Lord, when those evil thoughts were in my mind?" Jesus replied, "I was in thy heart, taking pleasure in the victorious battle thou wert waging."

3. By *resisting* an impure thought or desire is not meant thinking of and pondering over it. In temptation of this nature, the most effective means is to reject it at once, then to *ignore* it, to do something else to distract the mind. Thinking of and worrying about the temptation only makes it more persistent.

When do thoughts about impure things become sinful?—Thoughts about impure things become sinful when a person thinks of an unchaste act and deliberately takes pleasure in so thinking, or when unchaste desire or passion is aroused and consent is given to it.

An impure thought or desire becomes sinful when instead of rejecting it *we take pleasure* in it and keep it in our mind. Impure desires, if not rejected, lead to impure acts and a life of vice.

It is said that the model the great artist Leonardo da Vinci used for the figure of Jesus Christ in his painting "The Last Supper" was a young man of exceptional beauty, whose countenance expressed innocence and purity in a remarkable degree.

Some years after, when Leonardo da Vinci was ready to draw the figure of Judas the traitorous Apostle, he had a difficult time trying to find a model. So he went into the most disreputable haunts of the city, in the places where the worst criminals congregated, to seek a suitable model. He saw all sorts of criminals, immoral men altogether lost to all sense of decency, but still he was not satisfied.

At last one day he espied a wreck of a man, slinking in a corner of a low resort. His face had an expression so vicious and diabolical that the artist knew his search for a model for Judas was ended. Going near, he prevailed upon the fellow, with the offer of a great sum of money, to sit as a model.

The series of sittings was about to end, when one day Leonardo da Vinci said, "You know, since you came, I have always had a feeling that I have seen you somewhere before. I must be wrong, but the feeling persists. . . ." Thereupon the man in an outburst of despair cried, "Yes, you have seen me before! I was the innocent young man who sat as a model for the figure of that Christ there. . . . And now, see how I am sitting for Judas, for Judas. . . ."

What are the chief means of preserving the virtue of chastity?—The chief means of preserving the virtue of chastity are: to avoid carefully all unnecessary dangers, to seek God's help through prayer, frequent confession, Holy Communion, and assistance at Holy Mass, and to have a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

1. In all things form the habit of temperance. Avoid all unnecessary *dangers;* do not take any chances with unchastity; do not experiment. If you put a match to gunpowder it is sure to explode; there is no necessity to try and see whether it will not.

Shun the company of those that are impure. Impurity is no wonderful achievement to be proud about: any idiot can be impure. It is the strong soul that resists temptation and keeps himself clean. It is the chaste person that possesses manly strength.

2. Always remember that *God sees us.* Let us therefore seek His help through prayer.

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14:38). For instruction about matters of sex, go to your parents or to your pastor or older people whom you know are good.

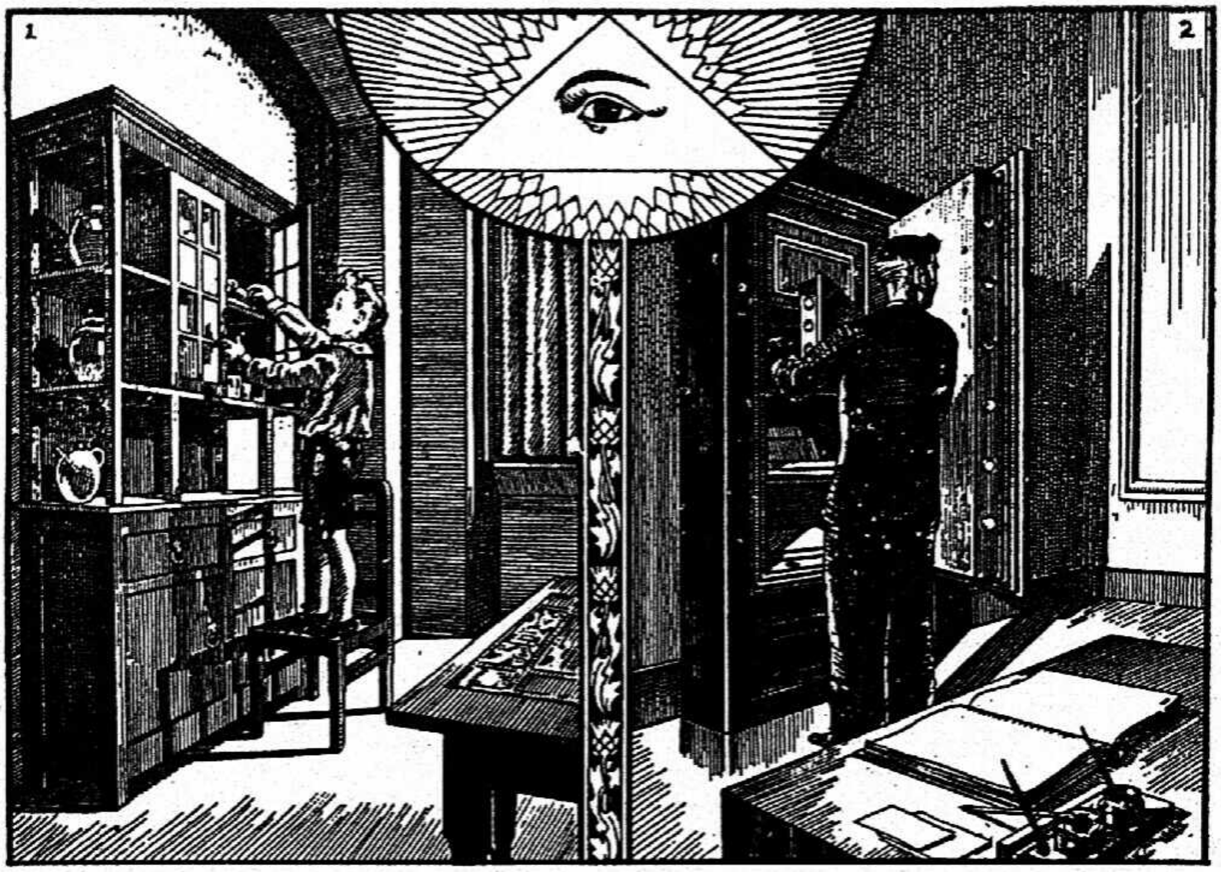
3. Be always modest and *pure* in your dress, posture, and conversation. This is not only to save yourself from immodesty, but to avoid giving occasion to others to sin, or being even an unwitting cause for others to sin.

Women who waste hours looking at themselves in the mirror, painting their faces and varnishing their nails, or choosing clothes to put on, *care more for their body* than for their soul. They should remember that after death, they will become *skull and bones* just like the rest, and all their finery will avail them nothing.

4. Receive the *sacraments* of Penance and Holy Eucharist often, and attend Holy Mass frequently.

Thus we follow the injunction: "Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

5. We should have a special love and devotion for our *Blessed Mother,* and daily ask her to preserve us in the chastity that she so greatly cherished.



Parents should be most careful to teach their children honesty in thought, word, and deed. As the child, so the man. If parents laugh indulgently at their child stealing food from the cupboard (1), keeping back change after errands, copying in examinations, throwing stones to break windows, defacing walls and books, picking flowers and fruits from another person's garden, etc., then those parents must not be surprised if when the child is grown up, he steals from the bank (2), forges signatures, cheats his employers, becomes a usurer, etc.

111. The Seventh and Tenth Commandments

"Thou shalt not steal."
"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods."

What does God forbid in the seventh commandment?—In the seventh commandment God forbids all dishonesty, such as stealing, cheating, unjust keeping of what belongs to others, unjust damage to the property of others, and the accepting of bribes by public officials.

"Do not any unjust thing in judgment, in rule, in weight, or in measure. Let the balance be just and the weights equal, the bushel just, and the sextary equal . . ." (Lev. 19:35-36).

1. The seventh and tenth commandments are treated together because both deal with commands about property. The seventh commandment refers to *external* acts, and the tenth to *intentions* or *desires*, against honesty.

One who is starving may, however, take what he absolutely needs. The right to live is above the right of property. But this permission must be used only in rare and extreme cases, when all other means have been exhausted.

2. The obligations regarding honesty are imposed on us in conscience, even though the civil laws may not compel us.

* "Take heed and guard yourself from all covetousness, for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). Violations of these commandments are opposed to natural law and justice, and are an attack on society, a menace to public security and peace.

What are the chief violations of the seventh commandment?—The chief violations of the seventh commandment are the following:

1. ***Stealing*** or ***theft*** is the secret taking of another person's property.

Few sins are more common than theft. Covetousness leads to theft. Those who like to show themselves off in luxury but have not the means frequently resort to theft. One must be very careful in avoiding even petty thefts, or he will contract a vice, and in a short time will find himself stealing more valuable things.

2. ***Robbery*** is the open and forcible taking of another person's property. Robbery or stealing is a slight or grave sin according to the injury done. Stealing a day's wages from a person is usually a mortal sin.

Stealing even a very small amount from a poor person is a mortal sin. A number of different small thefts from the same person or different persons within the space of one or two months, and amounting to a considerable sum, may be a mortal sin.

3. ***Cheating*** is depriving another of his property by crafty means. Included in cheating are: using false weights and measures, issuing counterfeit money, adulterating food and other products for sale, forgery, falsification of documents, smuggling, tampering with boundary lines, overcharging, excessive profits, arson with a view to collection of insurance money, etc.

Copying during an examination, or copying the work of another and presenting it as one's own work is also cheating. By it one obtains credit for what does not belong to him, and often gets what justly belongs to another. Copyrights are a form of property that must be respected.

4. ***Usury*** is the charging of excessive interest on money. A usurer takes unjust advantage of the need of another in order to make excessive profits. Under the appearance of helping the needy, a usurer involves them in greater hardships, taking from them their means of livelihood.

Another form of dishonesty is ***cornering the market***, which consists in buying up the entire supply of one product, such as wheat, for the purpose of forcing up prices, and thus making excessive profits.

5. ***Unjust damage*** done to the property of others is against the seventh commandment. One may injure another's property by setting it on fire, treading down his crops, fishing or shooting on his grounds without permission, pulling down fences, defacing books, furniture, and buildings, etc. One who does *wilful damage* to another's property must make good the loss. Accidental damage need not be made good, unless it came about through culpable negligence.

Thoughtless persons who pass through a farm sometimes pick fruit, vegetables, or corn. Some travelers have the bad habit of taking towels, dishes, pens, and similar things from trains, boats, and hotels as souvenirs. Children pick flowers from other people's gardens, throw stones at houses, write on desks, walls, and fences. They should be taught not to injure the property of others.

6. Public officials must be very careful not to ***accept bribes;*** they must guard against all signs of embezzlement.

Officials are placed in office not to enrich themselves, but to serve the public. They must treat all the citizens fairly and justly, reject all dishonest efforts to sway them from honesty, shun all kinds of peculation, and be most careful in their duty.

7. It is a sin to contract ***debts*** beyond one's ability to pay, and not to pay debts when due, even if able.

Young people should not go into debt; most of them, not having as yet any means of earning, would have no sure source from which to repay their debts. It is very wrong to get into debt to satisfy a craving for amusement, in order to buy more and more fashionable clothes, etc. But once in debt, to pay is a moral obligation.

8. ***Employers*** who do not pay a just living wage defraud others, and are guilty of injustice. ***Employees*** who waste time, do bad work wilfully, or neglect to take reasonable care of their employers' property violate the seventh commandment.

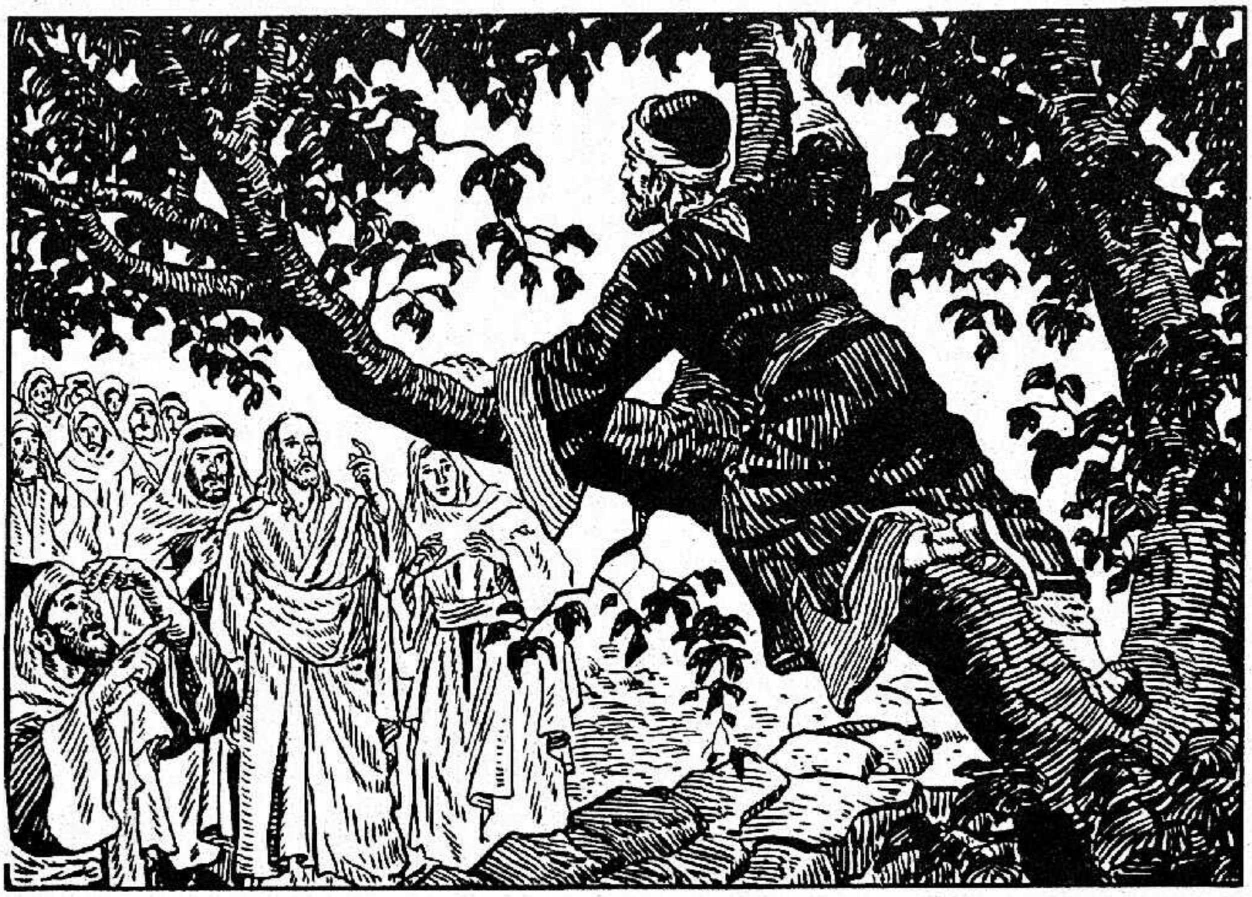
(Regarding relations between employers and employees, see more on pages 230-231.)

9. Another sin against this commandment is the *violation of business contracts.*

One may be guilty of dishonesty by obtaining money or goods from others for a specific purpose and using the donated articles for other purposes. One who borrows books, instruments, etc. must take care of them and return them in proper condition and in the proper time. Children must not steal from parents, or keep change from purchases.

10. *Buying or receiving stolen goods* is a sin against the seventh commandment; those who buy or receive stolen goods help and encourage thieves for the sake of gain.

Receiving all or a portion of the estate of a deceased person contrary to the expressed wishes of that person is a sin of dishonesty, even if done with the approval of civil courts.



Once our Lord was walking through Jericho. A rich publican, Zacheus, wished to see Him, but the crowd was so great that he could not. He therefore climbed up a tree along the path of our Lord. Jesus saw Zacheus and told him to come down, for He would be his guest. Zacheus told Jesus that he would restore fourfold whatever he had taken wrongly from anyone. Upon this Jesus called Zacheus a son of Abraham (Luke 19:1-10). Thus he determined to make reparation for his usury.

112. Reparation of Damage to Property

Are we obliged to repair damage unjustly done to the property of others?— We are obliged to repair damage unjustly done to the property of others, or to pay the amount of the damage, as far as we are able.

"If any man hurt a field or a vineyard, and put in his beast to feed upon that which is other men's: he shall restore the best of whatsoever he hath in his own field, or in his vineyard, according to the estimation of the damage" (Ex. 22:5).

1. If we have unknowingly, by purchase or gift, obtained possession of stolen property, we are bound to restore it to the rightful owner, as soon as we learn the truth.

We are *just possessors* only as long as we do not know the goods were stolen. As soon as we become aware of that fact, we must give up the property. "The beginning of a good way is to do justice; and this is more acceptable with God, than to offer sacrifices . . . Better is a little with justice, than great revenues with iniquity" (Proverbs 16:5, 8).

2. If one refuses to restore stolen property or to repair damage he has unjustly done to the property of others, he cannot be forgiven. He will not obtain pardon from God, nor absolution from the priest, even if he confess his sin over and over again.

As long as one does not *sincerely intend to make reparation*, his sin will not be remitted, even though he entreat divine pardon with weeping, or seek to appease divine justice by fasts and penances. It was not till Zacheus declared his determination to make restitution that Our Lord called him a son of Abraham (Luke 19:9).

3. Justice requires reparation of the evil we do, in so far as we have ability to make

that reparation. Without restitution or reparation, there is no forgiveness.

St. Alphonsus relates the story of a rich man who had an ulcer in the arm and was near death. The priest urged him to restore the property he had unjustly acquired, but the man refused, saying that if he did so, his three sons would be left penniless.

The priest then said he knew of a cure for the rich man's disease: a living person must allow his hand to be burned, and while still raw, be applied to the ulcer. Eager to get well, the rich man had his three sons called, but not one of them was willing to have his hand burned.

The priest then said: "See, not one of your sons will burn a hand for you; yet you are willing to burn in hell-fire for all eternity, only to leave them your wealth." The rich man's eyes were opened, and he consented to make restitution.

4. A person who has accidentally damaged the property of another through no fault of his own is not obliged to repair the damage unless required to do so by civil law. Employees are bound to take reasonable care of the property of employers.

Are we obliged to restore to the owner stolen goods, or their value? — We are obliged to restore to the owner stolen goods, or their value, whenever we are able.

"If any man steal an ox or a sheep, and kill or sell it: he shall restore five oxen for one ox, and four sheep for one sheep" (Ex. 22:1).

1. If the rightful owner is dead, the property must be restored *to his heirs*. If there are no heirs, it must be given to the poor or for some other charitable purpose.

If the thief *cannot restore* all he has stolen, he must restore all he can. If he has used what has been stolen, he must repair the damage done by restoring the equivalent. If he cannot restore anything, he must at least pray for the person he has wronged.

2. If poverty or some other circumstance *prevent* the thief from making restitution *immediately*, he must resolve to do so as soon as possible, and must make an effort to fulfill his resolution.

Restitution may be made *secretly*, without letting the owner know that restitution is being made. For instance, a money-order may be sent with a fictitious name; or the priest, who is pledged to secrecy, may be entrusted with the property to be restored.

3. If we *find* an article of value, we must strive to discover the owner, in order to restore the article. The more valuable it is, the greater our obligation to discover the owner and restore it to him. If after all our earnest efforts we fail to find the rightful owner, we may keep the article.

A mason, engaged in repairing the stone wall of a building, found a metal box hidden in a cavity in the wall. He broke open the box and found that it contained jewels of all descriptions. He at once concealed the box and took it home without telling anyone what he had found. A few days afterwards, wishing to realize some money on the jewels, he took out several from the box and offered them to a jeweler for sale. The jeweler immediately had him arrested. The jewels he had offered were recognized as having belonged to a rich merchant who had been robbed and murdered a month before. The mason was unable to prove that he had merely found the box of jewels. He was tried and imprisoned for life for the murder of the merchant.

What does the tenth commandment forbid?—The tenth commandment forbids all desire to take or to keep unjustly what belongs to others, and also forbids envy at their success.

1. We are permitted to desire the property of others only when we propose to obtain it by *legitimate means*, such as by purchase or exchange.

"For covetousnes is the root of all evils, and some in their eagerness to get rich have strayed from the faith and have involved themselves in many troubles" (1 Tim. 6:10).

2. Among those guilty of violating the tenth commandment are:

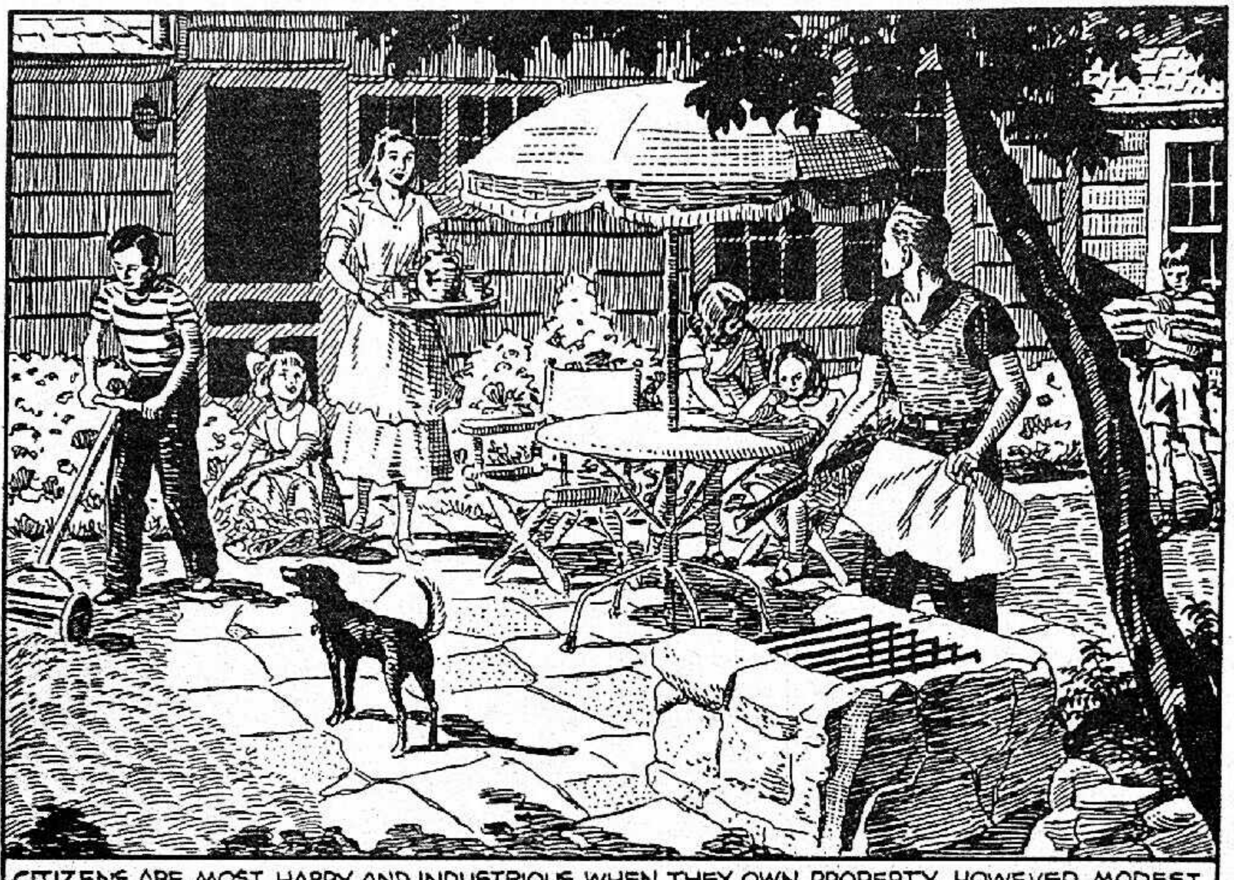
(a) Those who desire or *resolve to steal* or cause loss to others, even if the resolution is not carried out;

(b) Children who wish for the *death of their parents* in order to obtain their property;

(c) Those who wish for war, epidemics, storms, fire, legal troubles, social outbreaks or *other calamities*, in order to profit from the resulting high prices of their products; and

(d) Those who deny the *right of private property*, such as Socialists or Communists.

Communism is an extreme form of Socialism, a form of politico-economic system in which ownership of all property is vested in civil society, which then would control both production and distribution. It has repeatedly been condemned in papal encyclicals, notably those of Leo XIII and Pius XI.



CITIZENS ARE MOST HAPPY AND INDUSTRIOUS WHEN THEY OWN PROPERTY, HOWEVER MODEST.

The government should protect the right of private ownership. Citizens are most contented when they have some property to call their own, on which they can depend for the necessities of their families and for maintenance in their old age. Problems of peace and order increase with the increase of people who have no property of their own to think about. Something is wrong when a country's wealth is in the hands of a limited few; everyone should be owner of something, however little.

113. Social Justice

What teachings of the Church related to social-economic matters are based on the seventh and tenth commandments?— The teachings of the Church on social justice are based on the seventh and tenth commandments.

It is said that in Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891, the Church is not only collectively, but individually identified with the masses.

1. *Social justice* is the exercise of God-given individual rights taken in relation to the common welfare. In order to carry out its primary objective of sanctifying and saving men, the Church defines certain principles—of what we term "social justice" —applying the law of God to conditions of present-day economic life.

In these principles the moral and economic spheres merge. The Church enunciates the application of equity, of justice, to certain matters, like relations between employer and employee, between rich and poor, between individuals and groups.

2. A person has *obligations* towards his fellowmen; this fact is fundamental and immutable. If he fails to observe the obligations relating to the social-economic side of life, he sins against the seventh and tenth commandments.

Men are created equal, all being made to God's image, all destined for immortality. But there are natural inequalities, arising from physical, mental, material causes. A person must not exploit the inequalities, taking advantage of those less fortunate.

3. The most important documents summarizing the *attitude of the Church* on

social justice are the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, and *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI.

These encyclicals have formed the basis of many an existing political doctrine on social justice. If we would follow their teachings, we should not be continually violating the seventh and tenth commandments, causing jealousies and enmities among different social classes as among nations. If we would only obey the teachings of the Church there would be none of the "isms" that today infest the earth.

4. Social justice defines not only rights, but duties as well; it enunciates principles regarding labor and capital; it defines rights of living wage and of private ownership.

Pope Leo XIII said, "It must be within man's right to possess things, not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living things do, but to hold them in stable and permanent possession."

5. Many of the present ills of the world, including international jealousies and wars, arise from economic causes.

Many so-called "moderns" hold an attitude of contempt towards the teaching of the Church on the matter, in the false assumption that the Church should concern itself merely with prayers and religious ceremonial. But the Church was established to lead men to eternal salvation; and it cannot fulfill its mission unless it warn men against everything that endangers their salvation.

From the moral point of view, what are the purposes of economic life?—From the moral point of view the purposes of economic life are the following:

1. God-given *resources* such as those of the land, as well as human skills, must be developed for the benefit of God's children.

2. The *motive* of profit must always give way to the motive of the moral law.

3. God's gifts should be *distributed* in an equitable manner.

4. Everyone should be provided with useful *employment*, in accordance with his abilities and needs, and with his dignity as a human being created by God.

5. The *State*, as instrument of the common good, has the duty to intervene in economic life, for that purpose of the common good, of either the group or of the individual. But man and his family always have priority over the State.

6. There must always be *cooperation* in the economic life, between those who work and those who own.

Why is private ownership a right?—Private ownership is a right because every man has a right to life, and to all means necessary for the purposes of life.

On account of their importance to the social group, certain types of property should be under the control of either the State or of other groups of public ownership.

1. In order to *preserve his life*, man has a right to gain for himself and keep as his own those goods he needs for his subsistence. The possession of external goods indispensable to man's earthly existence, such as food, clothes, a home, and similar things, is a natural right.

It may, however, be said that the present distribution of wealth is not quite in accordance with the will of God; it cannot be pleasing to Him that a small minority should enjoy an excess of property, while an overwhelming majority can hardly keep body and soul together.

3. Private ownership is a right because if every moment of a person's life were occupied in providing for his daily maintenance, he would have nothing to sustain him in cases of illness or misfortune. Besides, in such a case, he would have no leisure in which to attend to the interests of his soul.

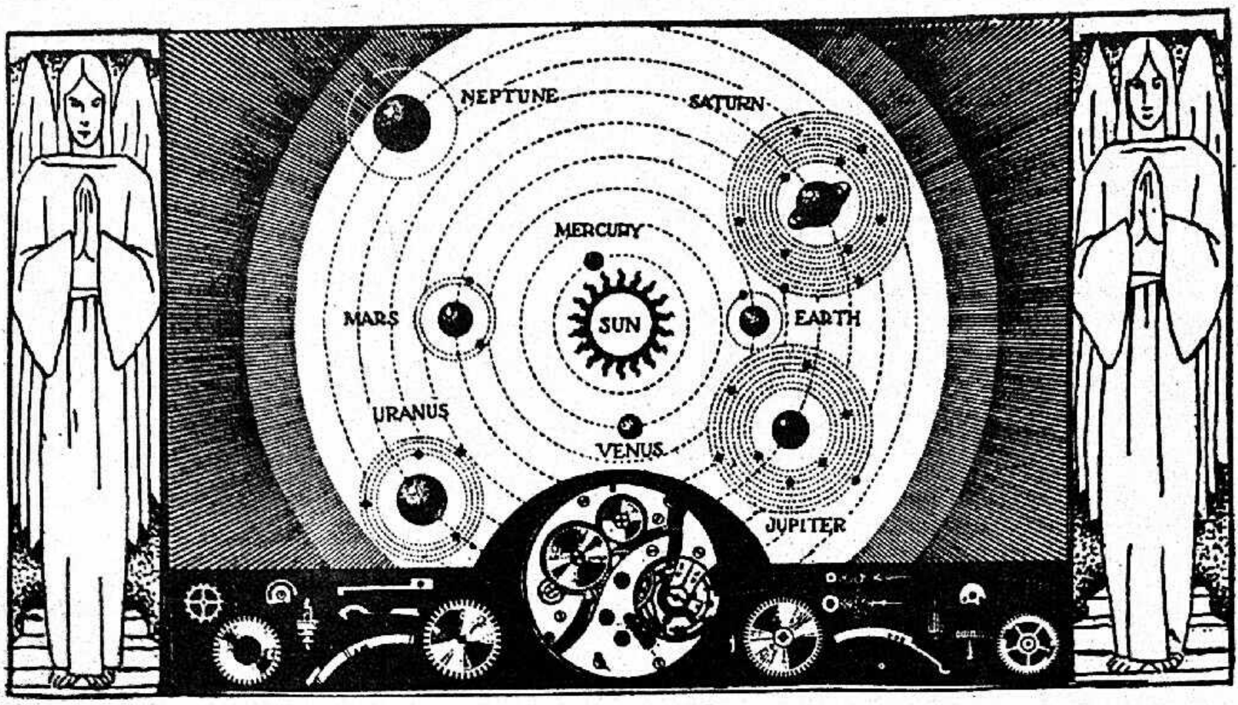
One is moreover bound to provide *for those dependent* on him, and this can only be done if he can keep property above what is absolutely needful.

4. Private ownership is limited by *moral obligations*, and should be subjected to social restrictions for the common good.

Some limitations on the right of private ownership are: (a) just title to ownership; (b) the urgency of the need for others; and (c) expropriation by the State for the public welfare, but with just compensation.

5. Both *Communism* and *Fascism* are errors, because they establish the godhood of the State. Communism confiscates all private property for the State, and aims to provide for the wants of everybody out of public funds.

Besides being impracticable, the idea of Communism violates individual and family rights. The State is merely empowered to supervise and regulate the acquisition and disposal of property for the common good, with justice to everyone. The State is *for the people*, and not the people for the State. Far from wronging the citizens, the State must aim at the welfare of each and all. ***Neither has the State any right to take Church property. To rob a man is theft; to rob God is sacrilege.***



Capital and Labor should work together, and not against each other. Neither can exist without the other. Labor must necessarily be subordinate to capital, or order ceases. Order is the law of the universe. Around the sun revolve the planets; around the planets revolve their moons and satellites. A watch runs smoothly as long as each part, however small, does its share; otherwise the watch goes out of order. The humblest laborer must be treated justly by his employer and in turn must be loyal to the employer, otherwise order will cease.

114. Capital and Labor

What are the duties of an employer? —An employer must:

1. Treat his employees *with charity* as human beings with immortal souls, not regarding them as slaves, or chattels or merely as money-making machines. He should take an interest in them, providing for them in sickness, accident, and old age.

The rich must not lessen the earnings of the workingman, whether by force, fraud, or usurious tactics.

2. Not work his employees *beyond their strength,* or put them to any work that is unsuited to their sex and age. There should be no working mothers, no child labor.

We cannot change God's Law. He commanded: "You shall not hurt a widow or an orphan. If you hurt them, they will *cry out to Me,* and I will hear their cry" (Exod. 22:23).

3. See to it that the working conditions are *safe* for the soul as well as for the body:

(a) by not exposing workingmen to dangerous occasions of sin and to evil influences;

(b) by giving them time to comply with their religious and family duties; and

(c) by discouraging all signs of neglect of the family and squandering of earnings.

4. *Pay a living wage;* that is, enough to support the employees and their families in decency, and enable them to educate their children properly. "Let no man circumvent his brother in business, because God is the avenger of these things" (1 Tim. 4:6).

This is a right, dictated by natural justice. If the employee is forced to accept harder conditions, because the employer will give no better, injustice is committed. It is a grievous sin not to pay a just wage to employees. It is theft and a sort of murder to keep back the wages of a poor laborer. "Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor, but thou shalt pay him the hire of his labour . . . lest he *cry* against thee to the Lord" (Deut. 24:14).

5. *Improve* as much as possible the *conditions* of the working classes. This is the only way we can avert disorder and remove discontent from the laborers, an increasing

number of whom today live in dire poverty while their employers enjoy abundance and luxury.

What are the duties of an employee?—An employee must:

1. Not look upon *work* as something to be ashamed of, for work is an honorable calling, while idleness is dishonorable and sinful.

It is well for us to keep in mind that this life is *only a pilgrimage*. Hence we should not be greedy or covetous of wealth. In a little while we shall all die, and our wealth will avail us nothing.

2. Render *obedience* to his employers, carrying out his part of all agreements and contracts, and serving faithfully and honestly.

It is a consolation for the humbly situated to know that in the next life there will be an absolutely *just distribution* of awards, according to what each deserves. The more patient we are on earth, the more resigned to our lot, the more God will reward us in heaven. "For those who love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8:28).

3. *Reverence* and *respect* the person and property of his employers. He should not be idle; he should not waste or pilfer his employers' goods, nor injure them by negligence.

Employees should take a *personal interest* in the property and business of their employers; and be careful of tools and materials entrusted to them.

4. Be *honest* and *just* in his dealings with his employers, and in whatever demands he may wish to make, avoiding agitation. He should be certain that he does not improve his condition in life at the expense of justice.

What are trade unions?—Trade unions are associations of workingmen aimed at the improvement of the conditions under which they work.

The general aim is to set a certain number of hours as the maximum for work, and a certain rate as minimum pay. The unions also make provision for sickness, old age, death, and unemployment of members.

1. Unfortunately, trade unions divide society into *classes:* one composed of those who pay the wages, and the other composed of those who receive the wages.

It would be well for present-day social reformers to take a leaf from the history of the guilds of the Middle Ages, when religion was of prime importance in social life. A guild was a society or organization formed among certain groups belonging to the same trade or occupation. There were guilds of shoemakers, tailors, goldsmiths, etc., as well as merchant and artist guilds. The purposes were social, economic and professional, and religious. The guild took care of old or incapacitated members, their widows and orphans. The guild contributed greatly to the excellence of work produced, since the aim was quality rather than quantity production.

2. To attain their aims, trade unions use *collective bargaining,* having as their most potent weapon the strike.

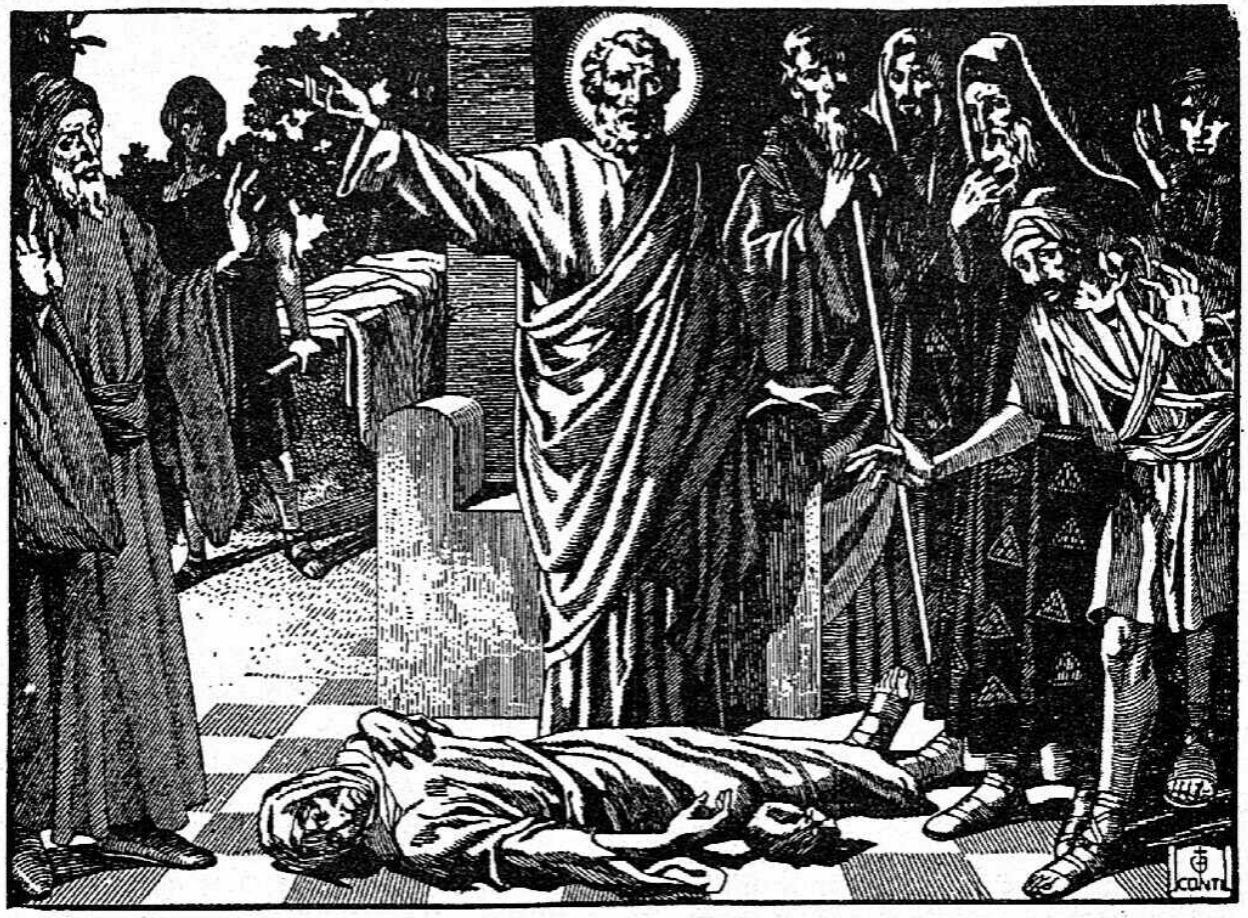
In strikes workingmen refuse to continue working, in order to force the employer to give in to certain demands that he has refused. Strikes are not morally unjustifiable if the demands are just and reasonable, if more friendly means of obtaining them have been tried and have failed, if there is no violation of contracts freely entered into, and if the damage done would be commensurate with the advantages to accrue.

3. Trade unions and *the strike* are lawful and allowable, since at present there is as yet no impartial arbitration between employers and employees. But objects and methods must always, like those of the individual, be subject to the laws of religion and morals. Trade unions and strikes must commit no violence, must cause no injustice to anyone. It is wrong to organize strikes in order to force an employer to grant demands that will ruin him or take away his reasonable profits. The use of violence in strikes is a serious sin.

General strikes or tie-ups often result in great suffering and even death to innocent parties. The State has the right to provide against them. It may even take charge of the utilities such as mines, railways, or other business, in order to serve the public, until an agreement is reached between the owners and the laborers.

4. Trade unions must take care that they do not develop into Communist organizations. These would be for purely material ends, involving a *class war* for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

To *prevent the spread* of Communism, the increasing hardships of the working classes must be ameliorated; the rich must be thoughtful of the poor, and religion must reign in all hearts. It could not be the will of God that a small minority should enjoy an excess of this world's goods, while the rest of His children live in destitution. Employers, and especially Catholic ones, must practice Christian justice in their relations with those in their employ. As St. Paul says, the rich ought "to do good, be rich in good works, give readily, sharing with others" (1 Tim. 6:18).



It was the custom among the first Christians for the rich to sell their property and give the money to the Apostles to be shared among all. Ananias and his wife Saphira, two disciples, sold their land. But they plotted to keep back some of the money. Giving the rest to St. Peter, Ananias pretended that it was the whole price that had been received for the land. St. Peter rebuked him and said that he lied against the Holy Ghost. Ananias fell down dead. Later, Saphira, not knowing what had happened to her husband, told the same lie to St. Peter. She also fell and died immediately after.

115. The Eighth Commandment

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

What are we commanded by the eighth commandment?—By the eighth commandment we are commanded to speak the truth in all things, but especially in what concerns the good name and honor of others.

1. God is the *God of truth,* and we are obliged to respect that truth. If we would prove ourselves children of God, we should, like Him, always respect the truth.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life," says Our Lord (John 14:6). "You shall not lie" (Lev. 19:11). This is why a lie, even when told for a good purpose, is always a sin, because it is contrary to the nature of God.

2. The lover of truth is like God, and well-pleasing to Him. The lover of truth is also held in esteem by his *fellowmen,* who know that they can trust him, for in him, as in Nathaniel (John 1:47), is no guile.

Even if we suffer from telling the truth, we shall be saved trouble and shall possess a clear conscience.

3. A habitual *liar* not only is often led into grave sin, but forfeits the trust of his fellow-beings, and is the cause of a great deal of harm. When people know that one is a habitual liar, they do not believe him even when he tells the truth.

The liar is almost always guilty of other sins. "A thief is better than a man that is always lying. Lying men are without honor" (Ecclus. 20:27-28).

4. In the eighth commandment God forbids us to detract in any way from our neighbor's honor or reputation. It is our good reputation that keeps us well-thought of and well-spoken of among our fellowmen.

"A good name is better than great riches: and good favor is above silver and gold" (Prov. 22:1). The esteem of others is essential to real happiness; those who know they are despised by their fellowmen are not likely to be happy in this life. One who brings another into disrepute is a thief, stealing a good name.

5. A *good name* is acquired by consistent struggle, by making our good works known, by defending ourselves whenever false accusations are made against us. This is why, in ordinary cases, we do our good works openly in accordance with Our Lord's injunction, "So let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

Good works are the best means of defending a good name. We must, however, be sure we do not do our good works only to make a show before men, but chiefly to please God. When our name is in danger, we should defend ourselves and justify ourselves; but it is foolish to make too much fuss over trifles, as going to court over nothing.

6. If we would not speak so often, we would avoid many sins into which we habitually fall, consisting of *sins of the tongue*. Most of the sins committed are sins of the tongue: lying, backbiting, slander, gossip, calumny, detraction, the telling of secrets, all the results of talkativeness.

Let us try an experiment: For one whole day do not speak unless absolutely necessary, but each time you would have talked, jot down what you had wanted to talk about. At the end of the day you will see how many useless things, things wasteful of time, not to mention unkind and sinful things, you had wanted to say. If people would only hold their tongues, how much more useful they could be!

7. Truthfulness promotes the general welfare of *society*, and mutual trust among men. The orderliness of the social order depends greatly on members speaking the truth.

Let us imagine our own special community, with our favorite friends and tradesmen, with those we contact every day on various matters. Let us imagine the situation if we were not certain they were telling the truth all the time, but only a probable ten percent of the time!

What is an evasion?—An evasion is a statement that may be interpreted in two ways.

1. We are permitted to give an evasive or *doublemeaning* answer when there is no obligation to answer, and in order: (a) to conceal a secret we have an obligation or a right to keep; and (b) to shield ourselves or others from harm. In an evasive reply, the hearer deceives himself by his interpretation of what he hears.

St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, was concealed in a vessel on the Nile, when the soldiers of the Emperor Julian overtook and stopped it. On their inquiring where Athanasius was, his servant replied: "He is not gone far." The soldiers went onward.

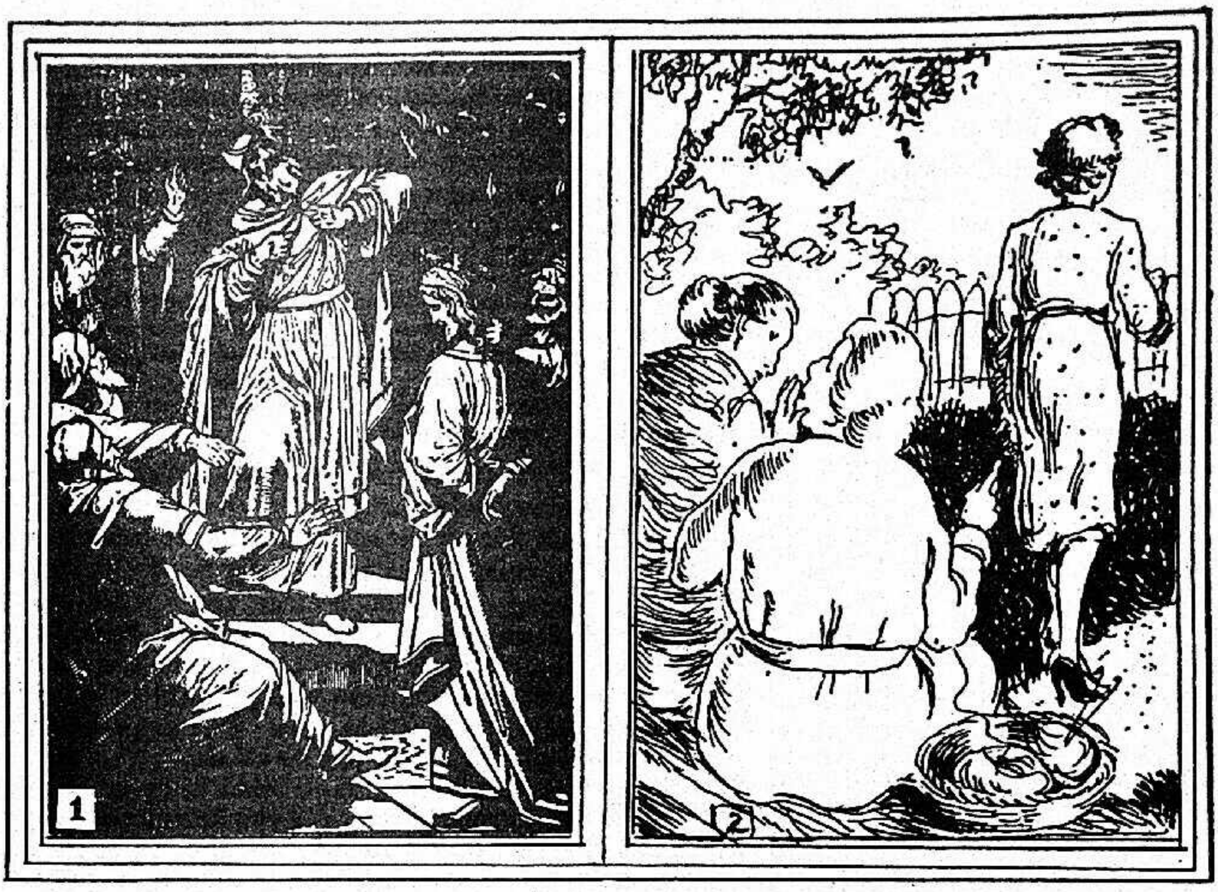
2. We are not supposed or expected to tell everybody our *private affairs* or those of our friends or superiors. Many persons out of carelessness or curiosity have a most irritating habit of asking very personal questions, such as "Where have you been?" "Where are you going?" "Did you have a visitor?" "How old are you?" "What is your salary?" "Where do you get so much money?" "What do you do all day?" "What is your work now?" "How much did you pay for your dress?" "Why did you leave home?" etc. If we are asked indiscreet questions by such curious or ill-bred people, we have a right to give such an evasive answer as: "I do not remember" (meaning, *I do not remember to tell you.*)

At best these questions are a sign of extreme *ill-breeding*. We should be more thoughtful and discreet, and give everybody the right to his own private affairs. Answering, "He is not at home" is a social custom understood to mean that the person is not receiving callers, even if he is in the house. If a person we cannot trust tries to borrow money from us we can say: "I have no money" (meaning, *I have none to lend you*).

3. When another has the *right to the truth*, we must answer simply and openly. Such is the case in buying or selling, or in drawing up an agreement. It would be against justice if two persons about to marry were to deceive each other by evasions about money matters and other things.

What does the eighth commandment forbid?—The eighth commandment forbids lies, rash judgment, detraction, calumny, and the telling of secrets we are bound to keep.

"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. 12:22). "Wherefore, put away lying and speak truth each one with his neighbor, because we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).



1. The greatest calumnies were spoken when false witnesses testified against Jesus before Caiphas. The high priest gave ear to the calumnies and condemned Our Lord to death, although he knew Him to be innocent. 2. People who gossip and spread tales that detract from the reputation of someone have much to answer for. "Brethren, do not speak against one another. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law" (Jas. 4:11).

116. Sins Against Truth

What is lying?—Lying is saying, for the purpose of deceiving others, what we know or suspect to be untrue.

Lying is a sin even when it may be the means of effecting much good. *The end does not justify the means*, and we must not commit evil in order to obtain good.

(a) A *malicious lie* is told for the purpose of injuring someone. It is by its nature a mortal sin, and becomes venial only when the injury done is slight. A lie taken under oath is *perjury*, a mortal sin.

(b) An *officious lie* is told to avert evil from oneself or others. It is called a "white" lie.

(c) A *jocose lie* is told to amuse others. Very often it is no sin at all, as when we relate an imaginary narrative for the amusement or instruction of others, tell a joke which we made up, relate fables and fairy tales, etc. But if a jocose lie has harmful results, it becomes sinful.

(d) Sins *related* to lying, as violations of the respect due to truth, are hypocrisy, and flattery.

1. ***Hypocrisy*** or dissimulation is acting a lie. It is hypocrisy to pretend to be better than we are.

It was hypocrisy of Judas to kiss Our Lord like a friend, when it was only to betray Him. Those who are outwardly pious but lead lives of sin are hypocrites. They resemble Satan, who can assume the form of an angel of light. Jesus called hypocrites "whited sepulchers", beautiful outside, but within full of dead men's bones.

2. ***Flattery*** consists in praising a person immoderately, against one's conviction, for an ulterior motive. A flatterer lies in order to secure an advantage for himself.

"A man that speaketh to his friend with flattering and dissembling words spreadeth a net for his feet" (Prov. 29:5). "It is better to be rebuked by a wise man than to be deceived by the flattery of fools" (Ecclus. 7:6). "Woe to you that call evil good!"

(Is. 5:20). Flatterers criticize and ridicule a man behind his back, but they praise him before his face.

When does a person commit the sin of rash judgment?—A person commits the sin of rash judgment when, without sufficient reason, he believes something harmful to another's character.

People judge others by themselves; he who is not evil will less likely think evil quickly of others; he who is a sinner will interpret the actions of others in an evil manner at once. One's judgment of others is a reflection of his own character. "Charity thinks no evil" (1 Cor. 13:5). A just person, even when he sees evil, tries to avoid thinking of it, and leaves the judgment to God. A person is guilty of *rash suspicion* when he suspects on insufficient grounds. "Do not judge, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged" (Matt. 7:1-2).

When does a person commit the sin of detraction?—A person commits the sin of detraction when, without good reason, he makes known the hidden faults of another.

1. To speak of *what everybody knows* or of what appeared in the newspapers is not detraction. It is however contemptible for newspapers to publish family troubles that are of no public concern.

Tale-bearing is a most despicable form of detraction. It consists in repeating to a person unfavorable remarks made about him.

2. Uncharitable conversation is commonly termed *backbiting,* a cowardly act of discussing the known faults of another without necessity, and behind his back.

It is *wrong to listen* to detraction and uncharitable conversation, if we take pleasure in it or encourage it. When the conversation turns to another person's faults, we should try to excuse him or change the subject. "Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbor? Let it die with thee" (Ecclus. 19:10).

When does a person commit the sin of calumny or slander?—A person commits the sin of calumny or slander when by lying he injures the good name of another.

Any public defamatory accusation, maliciously made, whether the facts be true or not, is called *libel.* Exaggerating faults is a form of calumny. *Gossip* is a form of calumny, because it usually exaggerates a person's faults or sins with malice. The sin of slander is a double one: lack of charity and a violation of the tenth commandment.

When are we obliged to keep a secret?—We are obliged to keep a secret when we have promised to do so, when our office requires it, or when the good of another demands it.

1. A priest may ***never*** reveal anything confided to him *in confession,* even if keeping it secret will result in death for himself or others. This rule has no exception.

2. A secret may be *revealed* when: (a) it is for the good of the guilty person; (b) it will save ourselves or others from evil; (c) keeping it secret is against justice or the welfare of society; and (d) the person to whom it is revealed has a right to know.

When there is just reason for revealing a secret, we may do so to persons *in authority,* such as parents, superiors, teachers, or courts of law. Serious faults should be made known to parents, teachers, and superiors, who may be able to correct them. Care should be taken to avoid exaggerating faults.

3. It is wrong to read *another person's letters* without permission. Eavesdroppers are contemptible. A tattletale is despicable.

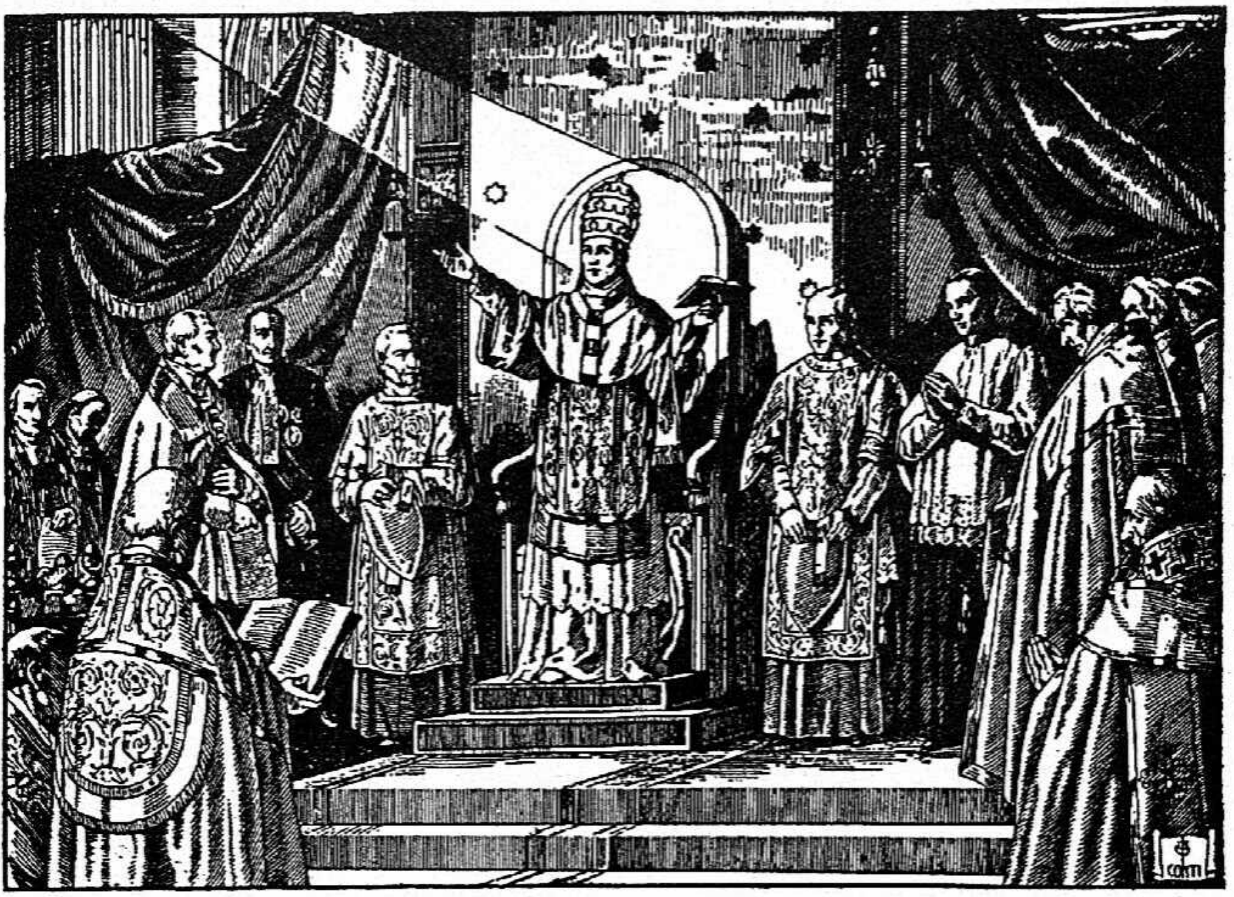
What must a person do who has sinned by detraction or calumny, or has told a secret he is bound to keep?—A person who has sinned by detraction or calumny, or who has told a secret he is bound to keep, must repair the harm he has done to his neighbor, as far as he is able.

1. If the offense was made in private, we must *apologize,* and take back what we said.

If the offense was made before others, we must retract publicly. If we do not endeavor to repair the harm we have done, we cannot obtain God's pardon or the priest's absolution.

2. It is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to make perfect reparation for calumny and detraction. *Words once spoken* are not forgotten by those who hear. This fact should make us very careful about avoiding sins against the eighth commandment. God gave us a tongue to speak kind and useful words. We should make a rule *never to speak ill* of anyone.

A story is told of the saintly Curé d'Ars and a penitent at the confessional, who had confessed having gossiped about an acquaintance. The penitent thought he got off very easily indeed when all the penance he was given was to drop one by one ten blades of straw on the yard before his house, at a distance of five meters apart, and then to go back and pick up the ten blades. Going home, he proceeded to perform the penance. But he realized the lesson the saintly priest wished him to learn when, upon returning to pick up the blades of straw, he could find none; the wind had blown them all away.



Our Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule its members, in order to lead them to their eternal salvation. And to fulfill these ends, the Church has power to make laws. Our Lord gave the Apostles full power; He sent them as God the Father had sent Him. Disobedience to the Church is therefore disobedience to God.

117. The Commandments of the Church

Whence has the Catholic Church the right to make laws?—The Catholic Church has the right to make laws from Jesus Christ, Who said to the Apostles, the first bishops of His Church: "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven."

1. No society can exist without the *power to govern* its members. No government is possible without laws. Unless the Church had the power and right to make laws, it could not lead its members to heaven.

Our Lord said: "If he refuse to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican. Amen I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. 18:17-18). This power to bind and loose is called the "power of the keys."

2. Authority to make laws includes *power to enforce* them. Hence the Church has the right to punish disobedient members. This it does by refusing them the sacraments, excommunicating them, denying them Catholic burial, and other penalties.

"He therefore said to them again, 'Peace be to you! As the Father has sent me, I also send you' " (John 20:21).

3. We are under a rigorous obligation to obey the laws or precepts of the Church. ***Disobedience to the Church is disobedience to God,*** Who gave it full authority.

A bad Catholic once said to a friend, "God will not punish me for not keeping the Church laws on fasting and abstinence. I observe all the Ten Commandments, and I do not need to obey the laws made only by the Church." But the friend answered, "Did not God command us to hear the Church? Then if we do not obey its laws, we disobey Him as well."

By whom is this right to make laws exercised?—This right to make laws is exercised by the bishops, the successors of the Apostles, and especially by the Pope, who as the successor of the chief of the Apostles, Saint Peter, has the right to make laws for the universal Church.

1. *The Pope* can make and unmake laws for the entire Church; his authority is supreme and unquestioned. Every bishop, every priest, every member of the Church is subject to him.

This authority comes from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who chose Peter as Head of His Church. The Holy Father is our St. Peter, his direct successor; we must obey him as Christ commanded all to obey Peter.

2. Laws are also made by *each bishop* for his own diocese, and by a general council of bishops for the entire Church. These last have no efficacy without the Pope's approval.

Those who appeal from the decisions of the Pope to a general council are excommunicated.

3. A good Catholic shows *obedience* to God by conforming himself not only to the letter, but to the spirit of the laws of the Church. He obeys strictly what the Church commands, praises what is praises, condemns what it condemns. The Church is our Mother, good and wise, who looks only to our temporal and spiritual welfare; let us show our love for her by the obedience we render.

The *Church is our Mother*, given us by Christ Himself, to guide us until He comes again. If we obey this guide we shall have peace on earth, and eternal happiness with God in heaven. The Church can truly say with our Divine Saviour: "My yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Matt. 11:30).

4. The laws of the Church, in general, do not command things which are of their *nature* obligatory. For example, abstinence for certain days is not a natural law, but a *human law*. Therefore, this being the case, the Church that made such human laws can also dispense from them, change them, or abolish them altogether.

This is why bishops can excuse from fasting and abstinence when they find good reason; this is why the holydays of obligation are not uniform throughout the entire world. The Church cannot abolish or change the Commandments of God, but it can its own commandments. All natural laws are included in the Ten Commandments; these everybody, everywhere, *must* obey at all times.

Which are the chief commandments, or laws, of the Church?—The chief commandments, or laws, of the Church are these six:

1. To assist at Mass on all Sundays and holydays of obligation.

2. To fast and to abstain on the days appointed.

3. To confess our sins at least once a year.

4. To receive Holy Communion during the Easter time.

5. To contribute to the support of the Church.

6. To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.

Are there any other commandments, or laws, of the Church, besides these six?—There are many other commandments, or laws, of the Church besides these six: but these are the principal ones, and the ones with which the ordinary life of Catholics is concerned.

1. A Catholic is bound to observe all of the precepts of the Church. Some of them forbid:

(a) The reading or possession of bad books, magazines, and other publications.

(b) Membership in Masonic or other anti-Catholic associations.

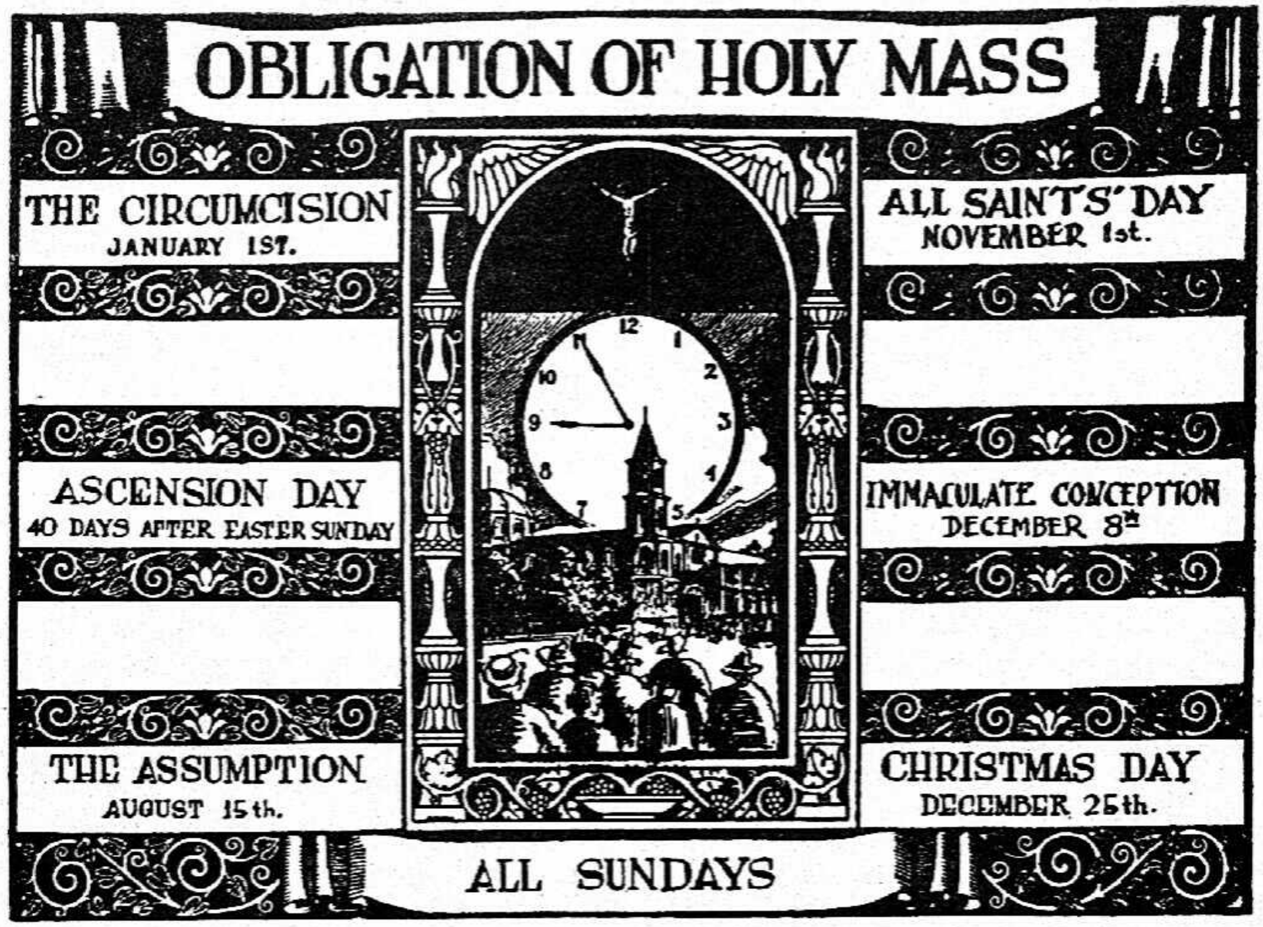
(c) Cremation of the bodies of the dead.

(d) The education of Catholic children in non-Catholic schools; etc.

Laws for the government of the Catholic Church are contained in the Code of Canon Law, which at present contains 2414 canons. From time to time, as necessity arises, the Pope through the different Roman Congregations issues decrees, laws, or regulations for the welfare of the Church. Catholics are obliged to obey these laws.

2. The Church, through its rulers, has the *power to dispense* from its precepts. The Pope, the bishops, and the parish priests may for weighty reasons release or excuse the faithful from the observance of particular Church laws.

It may happen that in a certain community the patronal feast may fall on a Friday of Lent. Because of the unusually great number of people, it would be difficult to provide abstinence food for everybody. In such cases the Bishop may grant a dispensation from abstinence, and even fasting, locally.


OBLIGATION OF HOLY MASS
THE CIRCUMCISION
JANUARY 1ST.
ALL SAINTS' DAY
NOVEMBER 1st.
ASCENSION DAY
40 DAYS AFTER EASTER SUNDAY
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
DECEMBER 8th
THE ASSUMPTION
AUGUST 15th.
CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25th.
ALL SUNDAYS

On holydays of obligation, just as on Sundays, we must hear Mass and abstain from unnecessary servile work. If without any grave reason one fails to sanctify the holydays of obligation he commits a mortal sin. Those obliged to work on holydays of obligation should at least hear Mass before going to their work. Catholic employers have a serious obligation of making it easy for those under them to sanctify holydays of obligation. All are children of the same Eternal Father

118. First Commandment of the Church

"To assist at Mass on all Sundays and holydays of obligation."

What sin does a Catholic commit who through his own fault misses Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation? — A Catholic who through his own fault misses Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation commits a mortal sin.

The precept is not binding on one who must care for the sick, or lives rather far from a church, or who has urgent work, or is ill.

1. The first precept of the Church requires us to sanctify Sundays and holydays of obligation. Then we render to God and the saints some of the honor due them.

The early Christians celebrated many festivals so that they might keep alive the memory of certain events or benefits from God. The aim of instituting holydays is to have the faithful remember for all time the important events commemorated, and to have them give praise and thanksgiving to God for them. This is why we should always try to celebrate holydays in a becoming manner. Some persons unhappily treat holydays as merely days to eat and drink and be merry, without regard for the occasion commemorated.

2. The civil law does not recognize as holydays some of the Church holydays of obligation; factories, offices, and schools keep open on those days. But even if Catholics must go to work on such holydays, they should at least try to hear Mass. Numerous churches celebrate Mass at an early hour in the morning, as also in the evening.

Persons not obliged to work on holydays of obligation should avoid doing so. But those who must work need remember only Our Lord's words: "The

Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 3:4-5).

Which are the holydays of obligation in the United States?—The holydays of obligation in the United States are these six:

1. Christmas Day (December 25).

On this day we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ in the stable at Bethlehem. "And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke: 6-7).

2. The Circumcision (January 1).

When Jesus was eight days old, He was circumcised, according to the custom of the Jews. "And when eight days were fulfilled for his circumcision, his name was called Jesus" (Luke 2:21). In Hebrew, Jesus means "Saviour." The name most commonly given to the Messias by the Prophets was "Emmanuel," which means, God with us..

3. Ascension Thursday (40 days after Easter).

Forty days after His Resurrection from the dead, Our Lord ascended into heaven from Mount Olivet. "Now he led them out towards Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass as he blessed them, that he parted from them and was carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-51). And when he had said this, he was lifted up before their eyes, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing up to heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white garments, and said to them, "Men of Galilee, . . . this Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have seen him going up to heaven" (Acts. 1:9-11).

4. The Assumption (August 15).

After her death, the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary was reunited to her incorrupt body, and she was taken up to heaven by the ministry of angels. No one has ever claimed possessing any relic of Mary's body; if she had not been assumed into heaven, would not the Apostles, who revered her highly, have kept her relics?

5. All Saints' Day (November 1).

On All Saints' Day we honor the memory of all the Saints in heaven and implore their intercession.

6. The Immaculate Conception (December 8).

God Himself proclaimed Mary's spotless purity in Paradise (Gen. 3:15); the archangel Gabriel announced it, calling her "full of grace." Christians throughout the ages have called Mary immaculate; the dogma was declared by the Pope in 1854. It is an article of faith to believe that Mary was conceived entirely free from original sin.

There are four other holydays of obligation in the *universal Church:* the Feasts of Epiphany, Corpus Christi, Saint Joseph, and Saints Peter and Paul.

With the approval of the Holy See, these four feasts are not holydays of obligation in the United States.

What else does the Church oblige us to do on holydays of obligation?—The Church obliges us to abstain from servile work on holydays of obligation, just as on Sundays, as far as we are able. (*See pages 204-205, Unnecessary Servile Work.*)

On these days Catholics should keep away from housework like washing and housecleaning.

Why were holydays instituted by the Church?—Holydays were instituted by the Church to remind us of the mysteries of our religion, and of the important events in the lives of Christ and of His Blessed Mother, and to recall to us the virtues and the rewards of the saints.

1. The Church appoints festivals in honor of Our Lord, in order that we may *recall the principal mysteries* of our Redemption, thank God for the graces received through these mysteries, and make them bear fruit in our lives.

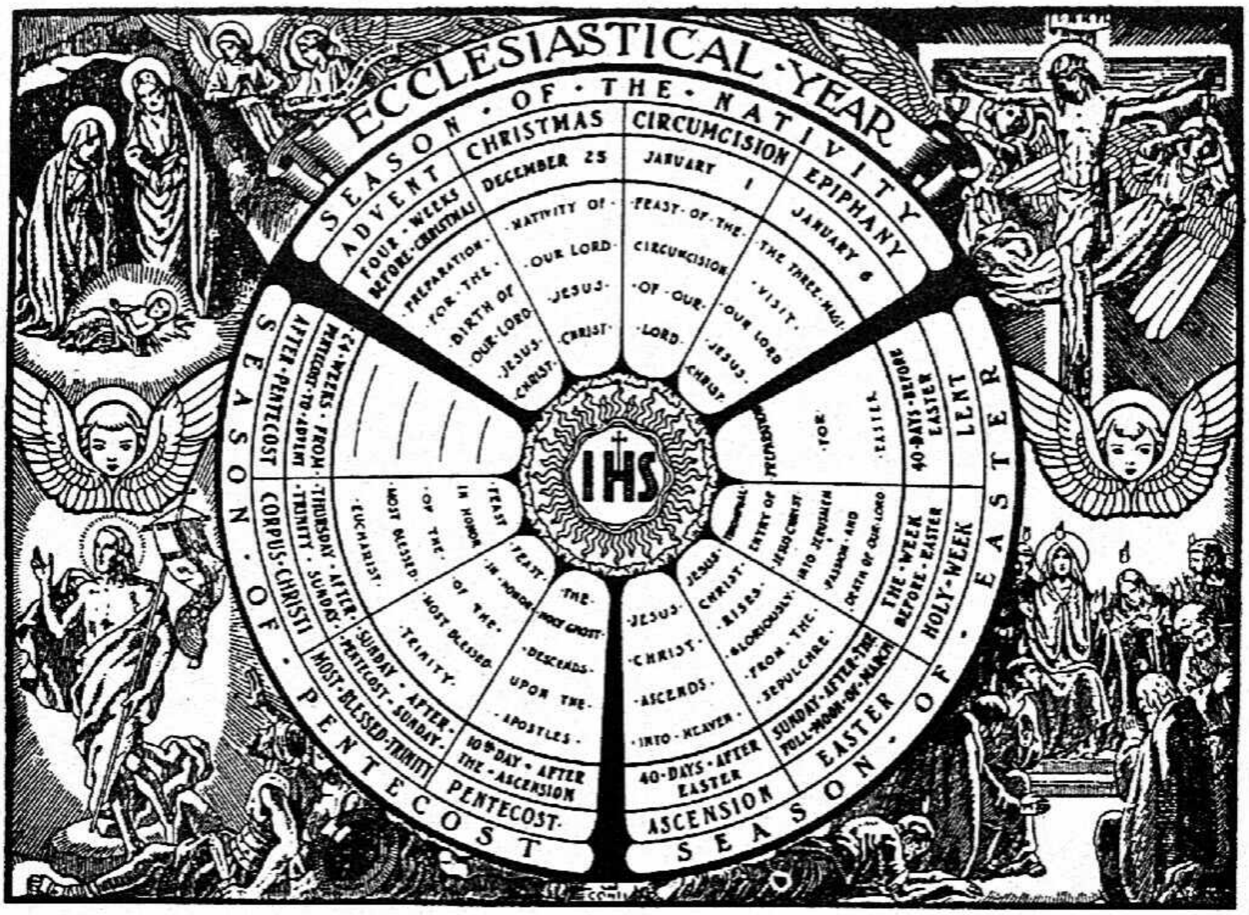
The feasts of Our Lord that do not necessarily fall on a Sunday are: Christmas, the Circumcision, and the Ascension. Easter and Pentecost always *fall on a Sunday.*

2. *Other feasts* of Our Lord that should be properly celebrated are: (a) the Epiphany, January 6; and (b) Corpus Christi, the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

The Epiphany celebrates the adoration of the newly-born Child by the Magi, the Wise Men from the East,—Melchor, Gaspar, and Baltassar. The feast is called the Epiphany (or "manifestation") because it celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

3. The festivals in honor of Our Lady and the Saints are prescribed, that we may reverence them as God's friends, and profit by their intercession and example.

Whenever able, we should try to hear Mass on other important holydays, even though they may not be of obligation. Two of these important feasts are: (a) the feast of St. Joseph on March 19, and (b) the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29.


ECCLESIASTICAL · YEAR
SEASON · OF · THE · NATIVITY
ADVENT
FOUR · WEEKS BEFORE · CHRISTMAS
· PREPARATION · FOR · THE · BIRTH OF OUR · LORD · JESUS · CHRIST ·
CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 25
· NATIVITY OF · OUR LORD · JESUS · CHRIST ·
CIRCUMCISION
JANUARY 1
· FEAST · OF · THE · CIRCUMCISION · OF · OUR · LORD ·
EPIPHANY
JANUARY 6
· THE THREE · MAGI · VISIT · OUR LORD · JESUS · CHRIST
SEASON · OF · EASTER
LENT
40 · DAYS · BEFORE EASTER
PREPARATION · FOR · EASTER ·
HOLY · WEEK
THE · WEEK BEFORE · EASTER
TRIUMPHAL · ENTRY OF · JESUS CHRIST · INTO JERUSALEM · PASSION · AND · DEATH OF OUR LORD
EASTER
SUNDAY · AFTER · THE FULL · MOON · OF · MARCH
· JESUS · CHRIST · RISES · GLORIOUSLY · FROM · THE · SEPULCHRE ·
ASCENSION
40 · DAYS · AFTER EASTER
· JESUS · CHRIST · ASCENDS · INTO · HEAVEN ·
SEASON · OF · PENTECOST
PENTECOST ·
10th DAY · AFTER THE · ASCENSION
· THE · HOLY GHOST · DESCENDS · UPON THE · APOSTLES ·
MOST · BLESSED · TRINITY
SUNDAY · AFTER · PENTECOST · SUNDAY ·
· FEAST · IN HONOR · OF THE · MOST BLESSED · TRINITY ·
CORPUS · CHRISTI
· THURSDAY · AFTER · TRINITY · SUNDAY ·
· FEAST · IN HONOR · OF THE · MOST BLESSED · EUCHARIST ·
AFTER · PENTECOST
· 24 · WEEKS · FROM · PENTECOST · TO · ADVENT
IHS

The entire year is divided by the Church into periods and seasons, some of rejoicing, some of penance, and others of ordinary prayer and work. By following the cycle of feasts and fasts, and living in the spirit of each time, we shall sanctify the whole year and make it bear fruit pleasing to God. In observing the seasons, we should look upon the events as actually occurring. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ; she lives over every year the mysteries of His life. Thus we unite ourselves with Christ.

119. The Ecclesiastical Year

What is the ecclesiastical year?—The ecclesiastical years is the succession or cycle of seasons, including all the feasts, celebrated by the Church during the year.

1. The ecclesiastical year is made up of *six seasons* or periods of unequal length: Advent, Christmastide, Septuagesima, Lent, Paschal time, and the period from Pentecost to Advent. These periods are regulated in their occurrence by the three principal feasts of the year: Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. The Epistles and Gospels, as well as the Hymns and Sequences of the Mass, are in consonance with the seasons and periods of the ecclesiastical year.

The ecclesiastical year differs somewhat from the civil year. Instead of beginning on a fixed date, January 1, as the civil year does, the ecclesiastical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent, four Sundays before Christmas. (*See the Appendix*).

2. The three principal feasts of the year are: (a) Christmas, which commemorates the birth of Our Lord; (b) Easter, which celebrates His resurrection; and (c) Pentecost, which celebrates the descent of the Holy Ghost.

Each of these feasts has a season of preparation preceding, and a season of commemoration following. Easter is always the Sunday after the first full moon following March 21. Its position determines the position of the different seasons and moveable festivals of the entire year.

3. The Church commemorates the different feasts and seasons, placing the various events of the life of Our Lord before us, in

order that we may ponder over them and imitate the virtues presented.

Every day of the year the Church commemorates one or more of her saints, encouraging us to imitate them who imitated Christ, and to implore their intercession. By such commemorations, our thoughts are fixed on God, even amidst life's distractions.

What is Advent?—Advent is the period of preparation for Christmas.

"Advent" means coming. It begins with the first Sunday of Advent, and embraces the four Sundays before Christmas. It is a season of penance in preparation for the birth of the Redeemer.

The four weeks of Advent represent the four thousand years during which the coming of the Messias was expected and prepared for. As a sign of penance, the Church uses purple vestments for the Mass of the season, suppresses the joyous *Gloria*, omits flowers on the altar, and forbids the saying of the Nuptial Mass, etc.

What is Christmastide?—Christmastide is the season of celebration after Christmas, a season of joy.

During this period we celebrate events in the *child life* of Our Lord: the Circumcision, the Epiphany, the Feast of the Holy Family, the Purification, etc. The length of this period is regulated by the position of Septuagesima Sunday, which may occur any time between January 16 and February 22.

The period after Christmas symbolizes the youth of Jesus, the years that intervened between His birth and the beginning of His public life. We call this His hidden life in Nazareth.

What is Septuagesima? — Septuagesima is the period of preparation for Lent.

The season lasts two weeks and a half, from Septuagesima Sunday to Ash Wednesday, and includes three Sundays, respectively called Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima (70th, 60th, and 50th).

These were so named because in the early years of Christianity, many began fasting fifty, sixty, or seventy days before Easter.

What is Lent? — Lent is the period of penance preceding Easter.

1. Lent begins with the Wednesday after Quinguagesima, which is called *Ash Wednesday*, because on that day takes place the marking with ashes of the foreheads of the faithful.

Ash Wednesday is forty-six days before Easter; but we say Lent is forty days in length, because we do not count the six Sundays, on which no fasting is prescribed anywhere throughout the Church.

2. The *last two weeks* of Lent are called Passion Week and Holy Week respectively. Then the Church follows Christ closely through the last stages of His mortal life.

During the period of Lent, the public life of Our Lord is set before us, including His fasting, His Passion, and His death. In consonance with the penitential spirit of the season, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday inclusive, the Church forbids the saying of the Nuptial Mass.

3. In keeping with the *spirit of Lent*, Catholics are expected to abstain from worldly amusements, such as shows, feasting, etc. They should devote more time to prayer, penance, and religious exercises.

What is the Paschal Time?—The Paschal Time is the time from Easter till the eve of Trinity Sunday.

1. *Paschal Time* is a most important period, including the Ascension, and the ten days between that feast and Pentecost. The forty days between Easter and the Ascension commemorate the forty days Christ spent on earth after His Resurrection.

The three days before the Ascension are called *Rogation days*. On these days processions are held to implore God's blessings for an abundant harvest.

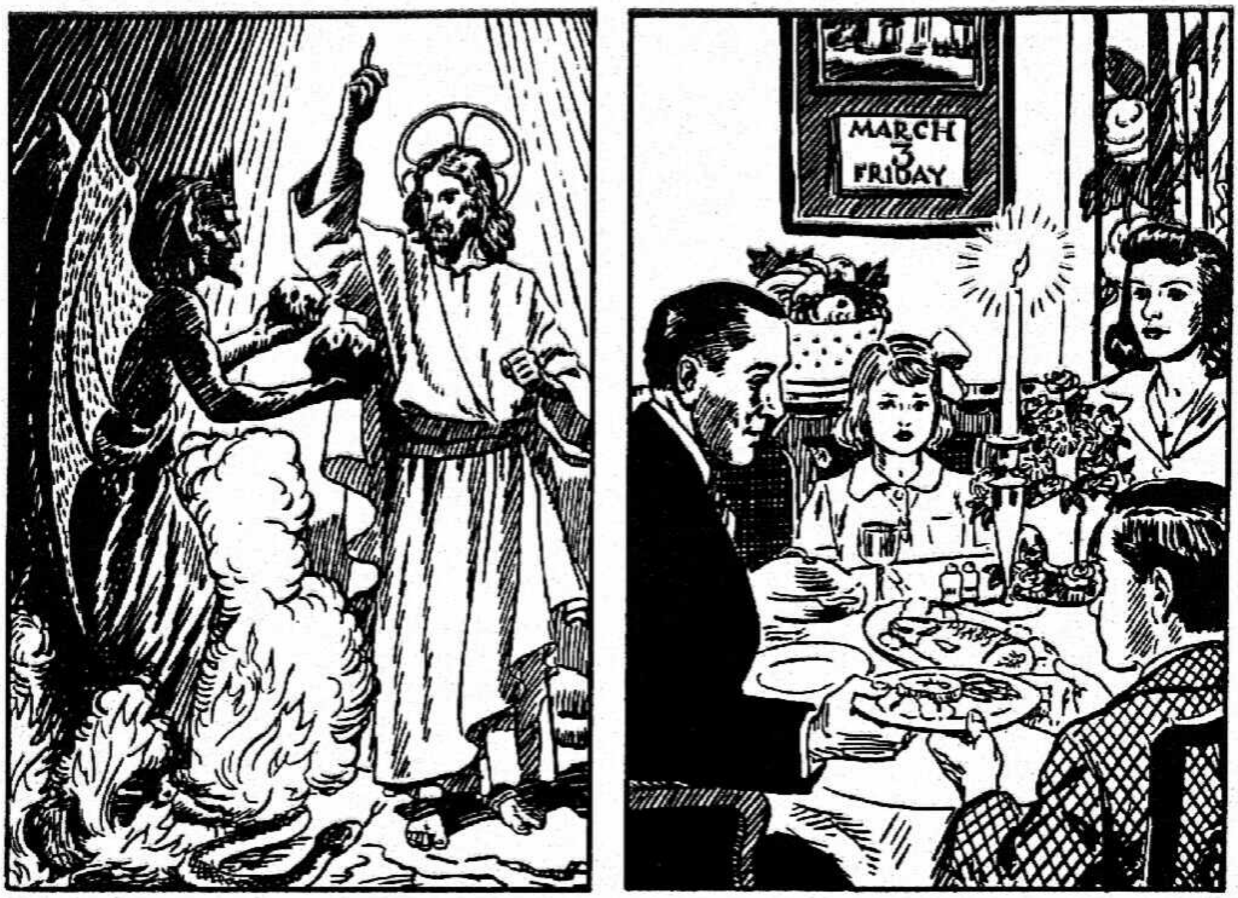
2. The ten days after the Ascension are a *preparation* for Pentecost, the feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles.

Paschal Time is a time of rejoicing. Its joyful character is shown by the constant repetition in the Church liturgy of the word of joy, *Alleluia* (Praise ye the Lord). During this period, we say the *Regina Coeli* instead of the *Angelus* three times a day.

How long is the Period after Pentecost?—The Period after Pentecost is the longest of the liturgical seasons, varying between 23 and 28 weeks.

It begins with the Feast of the Blessed Trinity, the Sunday after Pentecost, and extends to Advent. It takes up the *main part* of the year, and is devoted to the festivals of the saints, to Christian work and prayer.

The period after Pentecost represents the time that shall elapse before the Last Judgment. On the last Sunday after Pentecost the Gospel of the Mass is that which speaks of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as Judge of the living and the dead.



Our Lord Himself often fasted. He fasted forty days before He began His public life (1). By Church law, all baptized persons between the ages of 21 and 59 are obliged to fast, and all baptized persons 7 years and over are obliged to observe the abstinence days, unless excused or dispensed.

120. Second Commandment of the Church

"To fast and to abstain on the days appointed."

What is a fast day?—A fast day is a day on which only one full meal is allowed; but in the morning and evening some food may be taken, the quantity and quality of which are determined by approved local custom.

1. The *one full meal* may be taken either at noon or in the evening. Only at this meal may meat be taken; but both fish and meat may be taken at the same meal.

Fasting was a practice in the early Church. And the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Saul and Barnabas unto the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed and laid their hands upon them, they let them go (Acts 13:2-3).

2. *Eating between meals* is forbidden; drink that is not nourishing is permitted.

Wine, soda, tea, lemonade, beer, black coffee, and ices (flavored frozen water) are permitted.

Who are obliged to observe the fast days of the Church?—All baptized persons between the ages of 21 and 59 years are obliged to observe the fast days of the Church, unless they are excused or dispensed.

Pastors have the power of *dispensing* in particular cases, from fast or abstinence, or both, individuals as well as families. Persons excused from fasting must, however, observe abstinence unless they have also been excused from abstinence.

Those of weak health, the sick, the convalescent, nursing women, the very poor, and those engaged in hard work are *excused* from fasting. One in doubt as to his duties should *consult* pastor or confessor.

Young people below twenty-one have not done growing, and need more than one full meal daily. Those who have passed their fifty-ninth year are often weak, and have need of more than one full meal. The very poor have to work hard, and need more than one full meal to be able to do their duties. Among those who are dispensed on account of hard work are: teachers, nurses, magistrates, etc.

What is a day of abstinence?—A day of abstinence is a day on which we are not allowed the use of meat.

On such days we are forbidden all flesh meat, including meat soup and gravy. *Flesh meat* is the flesh of warm-blooded land animals, including birds and fowls.

Fish, snails, frogs, oysters, shrimps, and crabs may be taken on abstinence days, as well as milk, butter, cheese, eggs, and similar foods. Lard and the fat of any animals may be used in cooking and seasoning. On an abstinence day, unless it is also a fast day, only the *quality*, not the quantity, of food is regulated.

Who are obliged to observe the abstinence days of the Church?—All baptized persons seven years of age or over who have attained the age of reason are obliged to observe the abstinence days of the Church, unless they are excused or dispensed.

1. The sick and convalescent, those who do extremely hard work, and those too poor to obtain other foods are *excused.*

One who thinks he has sufficient reason to be excused should consult his pastor or confessor.

2. When there is a great concourse of people, or if public health is concerned, the bishop can *dispense* a particular locality, or even his entire diocese, from the law of fast or of abstinence, or both.

The bishops of the United States have faculties from the Holy See to dispense *working men* and their families from the law of abstinence except on Fridays, Ash Wednesday, Holy Saturday up to noon, and the vigil of Christmas. This is known as the "Workingmen's Indult."

Why does the Church command us to fast and to abstain?—The Church commands us to fast and to abstain in order that we may control the desires of the flesh, raise our minds more freely to God, and make satisfaction for sin.

"I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps after preaching to others I myself should be rejected" (1 Cor. 9:27).

1. The Church does not command abstinence and fasting because she considers meat and other foods evil in themselves. We merely *deny ourselves* for the glory of God and the good of our souls.

A *good Christian* will be careful to observe the laws of fast and abstinence. One who cannot fast should do some other penance.

2. The forty days' fast observed in *Lent* is in imitation of Our Lord, Who fasted forty days in the desert. It is a preparation for Easter. Friday as a day of abstinence commemorates Our Lord's Good Friday.

By fasting and meditation on the sufferings of Christ, we can best induce in ourselves a proper contrition for our sins. Fast and abstinence are pleasing to God only when we also refrain from sin and engage in good works. We should honor Our Lord's passion during Lent by abstaining from worldly pleasures and amusements. We should accept trials patiently, uniting them to Our Lord's.

3. Even from merely natural motives, fast and abstinence, far from ruining the health as some people claim, on the contrary are a preservation of *health.*

Reputable physicians will bear this fact out; and it is common knowledge that those who fast and abstain live longer lives than those always eating.

4. Fast and abstinence should not be carried to *excess,* to the injury of our health. Our duty to conserve our health is a law of God and of nature, and is over and above the law of the Church to fast and abstain. When the two conflict, the first prevails.

Obedience is better than sacrifice. We should always be temperate rather than eat too much ordinarily, then fast to excess on special occasions.

How can we know the days appointed for fast or abstinence?—We can know the days appointed for fast or abstinence from the instructions of our bishops and priests.

1. In most of the dioceses of the United States, the *fast days* are:

(a) The Ember days. These are twelve in number, being three per season, namely, the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays after: the first Sunday of Lent, Pentecost, September 14, and December 13.

(b) All days of Lent, except Sundays, up to noon on Holy Saturday.

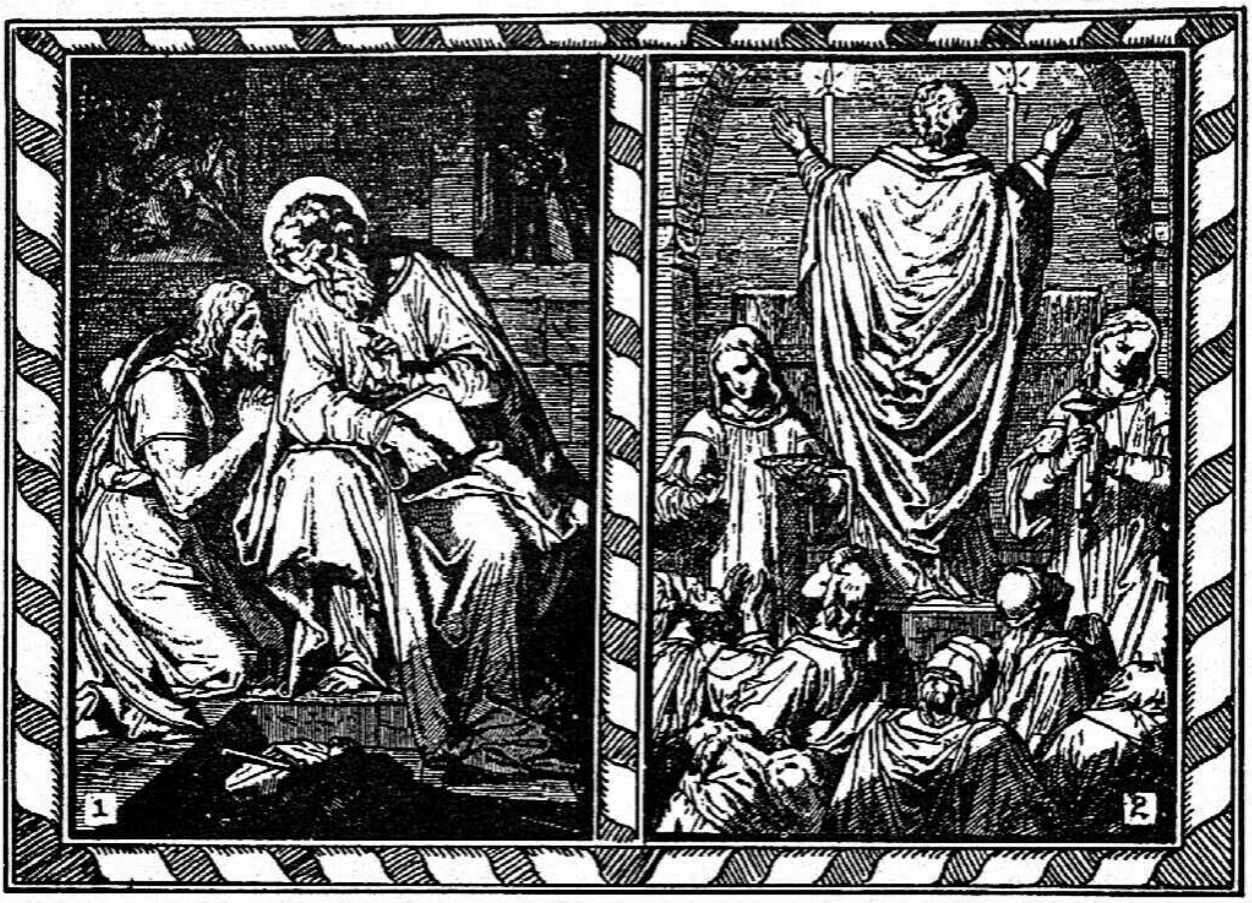
(c) The Vigils of Pentecost, the Assumption, All Saints', and Christmas.

2. In most dioceses, *abstinence days* are:

(a) All Fridays, except holydays.

(b) Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent.

(c) The Ember days and Vigils listed above for fast days.



The sacrament of Penance was instituted by Our Lord. The Apostles administered it. Thus in their time, as the Bible says, the Christian converts came to them, "confessing and declaring their deeds." (1) Thus they came to St. Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:18).

(2) The first Christians received the Body of Our Lord daily. It is the wish of the Church that if we cannot imitate them, we should at least receive Holy Communion every time we hear Mass, on Sundays and holydays of obligation. We should not need to go to Confession for each Communion.

121. 3rd and 4th Commandments of the Church

"To confess our sins at least once a year."
"To receive Holy Communion during the Easter Time."

What is meant by the commandment to confess our sins at least once a year?— By the commandment to confess our sins at least once a year is meant that we are strictly obliged to make a good confession within the year, if we have a mortal sin to confess.

1. All who have reached the *age of reason*, generally at the seventh year, are bound by this law, under pain of mortal sin. We are not bound to confess to our parish priest. We may go to any confessor who is lawfully approved, whomever we prefer, in whatever church he may be.

No special time is ordered for the yearly confession, but it is usually made in preparation for the annual Easter Communion. The annual confession and communion is what we call *"Easter duty"*.

2. Although the requirement is only once a year, good Catholics will not be satisfied with such a *meagre partaking* of the sacrament of penance. It need hardly be said that if anyone has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, he should go to confession without any delay. Should this not be possible, he must make an act of perfect contrition, and have the desire to receive the sacrament.

We should strive to go to confession at least once a month. Many Catholics go to confession once a week, to the great benefit of their souls.

3. When in danger of death, baptized persons in the state of mortal sin have the

obligation of receiving the sacrament of Penance.

Why should we go to confession frequently?—We should go to confession frequently because frequent confession greatly helps us to overcome temptation, to keep in the state of grace, and to grow in virtue.

1. The *graces* that we receive from confession are given abundantly if we receive the sacrament frequently. Our soul is like a house undergoing cleaning at confession; the more often the house is swept and scrubbed, the cleaner it is bound to be.

The devil, expelled from the soul at confession, tries to return again and again; but there will be no danger of his breaking in if the soul is barred and protected by the graces of confession, a strong defense against evil. "Confess, therefore, your sins to one another" (James 5:16).

2. Confession not only serves to cleanse us from past offenses, but helps to *strengthen* us against sin, and increases us in virtue. It is a potent medicine that not only gives a thorough cleaning, but also injects powerful nourishment.

Converted sinners are generally careful to go to confession frequently, because from confession they obtain strength to resist their former sins that try to tempt them back to the wrong path. Confession is like the Prodigal Son's father, who is filled with joy upon his return, and who brings out to offer him everything the house contains, in order to make him glad he has returned.

3. It is not necessary to go to confession for each Holy Communion, so long as one has no mortal sin. For prudent advice, one should consult one's confessor.

What sin does a Catholic commit who neglects to receive Holy Communion worthily during the Easter time?—A Catholic who neglects to receive Holy Communion worthily during the Easter time commits a mortal sin.

1. All who have come to the *use of reason* are bound by this law of Easter communion. Parents, teachers, and pastors are obliged to see that the children under their care comply with their Easter duty.

The obligation of the Easter Communion binds *under pain of mortal sin*. One does not fulfill the duty if his communion or confession is unworthy.

2. Catholics should not be satisfied with receiving the Body of Our Lord *only once a year*. The early Christians used to receive Holy Communion every day.

We should endeavor to receive Holy Communion frequently, as the Church urges. It does not seem very generous to make Our Lord wait one whole year when we may receive Him every day. If we only thought over our faith and realized what a great privilege it is for us to receive God Himself into our hearts, we would not need to be *obliged* to go to Holy Communion.

3. The Church *prescribes* annual communion in order that we may comply with the divine command to receive the Blessed Eucharist, and that the life of grace may be preserved in our souls.

Christ Himself commanded: "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you" (John 6:54). Holy Communion is the food of our souls. Let us not starve our souls by denying them this heavenly food.

When we are sick, we are eager enough to rush here, there, and everywhere, seeking remedies. But Holy Communion is the supernatural remedy for sick souls; and how many are there who seek it?

What is the Easter time in the United States?—The Easter time in the United States begins on the first Sunday of Lent and ends on Trinity Sunday.

Trinity Sunday, or the Sunday after Pentecost, is eight weeks after Easter.

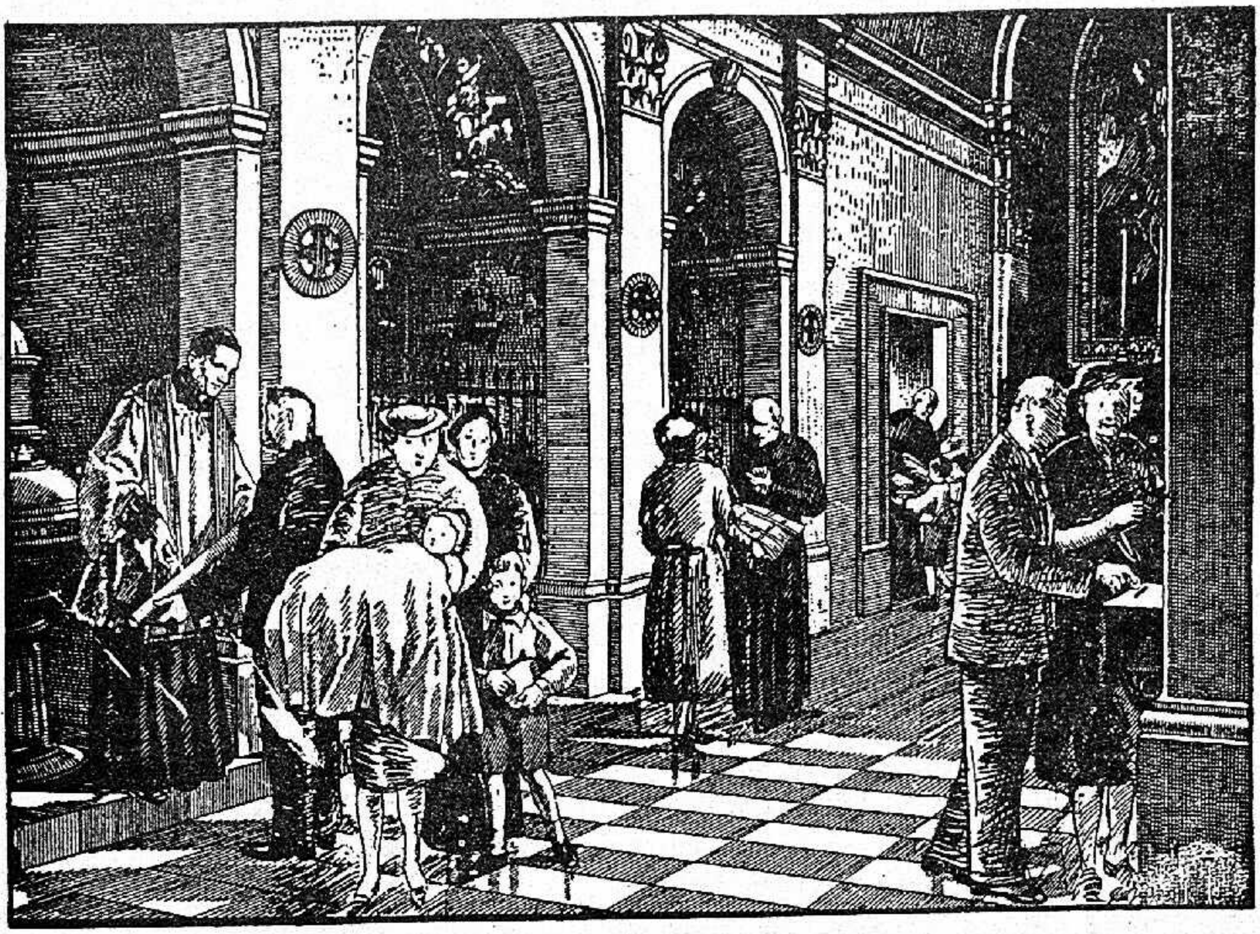
1. It is fitting to receive Holy Communion *at Easter*, because it was just a few days before Easter, during the Last Supper, that Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist.

In the early days of Christianity, Christians generally received Holy Communion as often as they could hear Mass. The law prescribing the reception of Holy Communion at Easter time was made in the thirteenth century.

2. As Christ died and rose again in the Easter time, it is fitting that Christians should at this time *die to sin* by the Sacrament of Penance, and rise to the life of grace through the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, which is a pledge of the future resurrection.

"As Christ has arisen from the dead, . . . so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

(Note. Full explanations of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist are to be found on pages 294 to 317, inclusive. They explain the manner of going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion.)



To help support our pastors, we can give various things, according to our means, their needs, and the needs of the Church. We can offer money, vestments, furnishings for the Church, food, candles, etc.

We should make a liberal offering every time the pastor performs some service for us, as at baptisms, funerals, blessing of our houses, marriages, etc. If there is a regular fee charged, we should not only pay it willingly, but, if we are able, give more than what is required.

122. Fifth Commandment of the Church

"To contribute to the support of the Church."

What is meant by the commandment to contribute to the support of the Church?— By the commandment to contribute to the support of the Church is meant that each of us is obliged to bear his fair share of the financial burden of the Holy See, of the diocese, and of the parish.

As St. Paul says: "What soldier ever serves at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Who feeds the flock, and does not eat of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. 9:7-8).

1. We are bound to support our *pastors*, because justice commands it, and God ordained it. Our pastors are those priests in whose districts or parishes we live.

Pastors and curates are appointed by the Bishop, and charged to give the necessary religious instruction, administer the sacraments, watch over the spiritual welfare of the faithful, etc. "The Lord directed that those who preach the gospel should have their living from the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). Good citizens never think of grumbling about the taxes they pay the government. They have as great, if not greater, obligation to help support the Church.

2. We are also obliged to help support our *Bishop*, as well as the Pope, and to meet all Church needs according to our ability.

If we do not support the Church, we would be unfaithful to Christ's command that it "go and make disciples of all nations". To teach, the Church has need of funds; our spiritual superiors need material support as much as we do, if not much more on account of their duties. "The laborer is worthy of his wages" (1 Tim. 5:18).

3. *Mass stipends* are given, not in payment for the spiritual benefits, but as a means of support for the one who says the Mass. One cannot buy a Mass.

For what purposes does the Church need help?—The Church needs help for many purposes, among which are the following:

1. Maintenance of *public worship, education,* and charity, as instruction of the young, relief of the poor, upkeep of the churches, seminaries, schools, colleges, asylums, hospitals, cemeteries, orphanages, etc.

Some Catholics think that the little given the parish priest once in a while as Mass stipend is enough to support the needs of the Church. It is not even enough to support the priest decently, to keep the church clean, pay the salaries of workmen, purchase vestments, lights, etc.

2. Maintenance of *missions* in heathen lands, and among non-Catholics here.

In what ways may we contribute to the support of the Church?—Some of the most common ways are:

1. By making a liberal and *voluntary offering* to the priest when he performs some religious ceremony in our behalf, such as blessing our houses and children, etc.

In parishes with an established schedule of fees for baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial, the fee should be paid without arguing or bargaining. More than the scheduled fee should be given by persons of means, as the schedule is for those of ordinary financial ability.

2. By not failing to put some offering on the *collection plate* every Sunday and holyday. Even children should form the habit of putting in a few cents.

It is a shame to see people with diamond rings on their fingers let the plate pass by unnoticed, or put in with their jeweled fingers a dime or a quarter. It certainly does not show much sense of proportion to give a quarter in church, and then to go out and ride in a luxurious car and proceed to a party that costs some ten dollars or more.

3. By contributing to *special funds,* as for the erection of a church or a school, the maintenance of religious establishments, the Mission Day funds for the Propagation of the Faith, for missions and retreats, etc.

We should be especially eager to contribute to funds collected directly for the Holy Father, as a proof of our loyalty to and love for the Father of all Christians, the Vicar of Christ on earth. The alms collected for the Holy Father are called "Peter's pence"; funds collected on Mission Day are sent to Rome, too, for the Propagation of the Faith, the spread of the Faith in mission lands.

4. By *supporting* a student in the seminary, some orphans in Catholic schools, catechists and priests in the missions, etc.

What merit before God it must be to support a student for the priesthood, or a priest in the missions! If we cannot ourselves go to serve Him there, we, as it were, offer Him a representative. If a father has no son for the seminary, he keeps a substitute there! And we remember that such persons as we benefit only naturally feel towards us a special affection, and will devote many of their prayers for their benefactors: what blessings may we not expect from the Masses and prayers of one whom we have helped on the way to the Priesthood!

How much should we contribute for the support of the Church?—We should contribute as much as we can, according to our means.

1. Persons who are in *moderate circumstances* and with large families cannot be expected to contribute as much as those who are rich.

The very poor are not expected to give anything. Sacraments are administered to them without fee.

2. Persons *who are rich* should remember that God gave them their wealth. They should return some of it to Him in thanksgiving for His generosity, remembering that He gives wealth only as a trust.

The rich have to account to God for what they do with the wealth that God has granted them. It is far from edifying to see so many wealthy persons throwing away money on food, clothes, cars, jewels, houses, travels, etc. and then give nothing at all to the pastor of their souls.

3. Ordinarily, if we give each month *one day's wages or revenue,* the needs of the Church will as a rule be taken care of. This is surely not too heavy a burden.

Many people go on year after year without giving a cent to the Church even when they can well do so. These people should remember that the Church and her ministers cannot subsist on air.

4. Wealthy Catholics should remember the Church in their *wills.* Many of these Catholics leave funds to some lay institution or other, for the erection of this or that building, and completely forget to leave anything to their Mother Church.

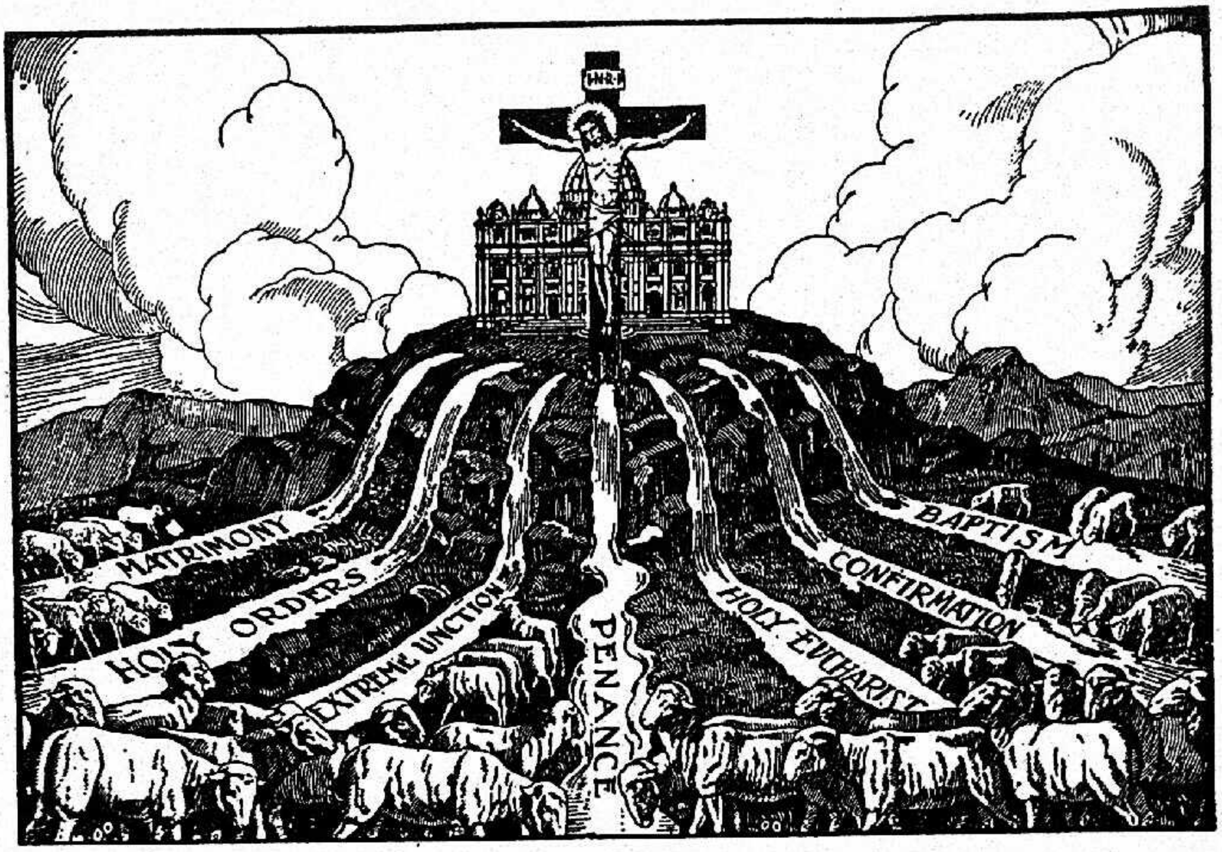
(Sixth Commandment of the Church: *"To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage."* — *See pages* 344-345, *"Church Laws on Marriage."*)

PART THREE

Means of Grace:

The Sacraments

Prayer



The sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ, by Whose merits we possess them. They do not derive any merit from the person administering them. Therefore the sacraments give grace of themselves, even when the priest or person administering them is unworthy, as long as the recipient has the proper dispositions. Good medicine is good regardless of the druggist or physician.

123. The Seven Sacraments

What is a sacrament?—A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Thus there are three things absolutely necessary to constitute a sacrament: (1) institution by Christ; (2) an outward sign, and (3) power to give grace.

1. ***Only Christ*** instituted the sacraments, because only God can endow signs with the power to give grace.

From the teaching of the Church, from tradition, and from Holy Scripture, we know that Christ instituted the seven sacraments. All the schismatic Eastern churches that separated from the Catholic Church in the early years of the Christian era continue to recognize the same seven sacraments that the Church does. The Church has *no power* to institute sacraments.

2. An outward ***sign*** is something perceived by the senses. The sign or ceremony is called the ***matter***, and the words, the ***form***, of the sacrament.

For example, we *see* the water used in baptism; we *hear* the words pronounced as the water is poured. These are sensible signs perceived by the senses of sight and hearing.

3. The sacraments *signify* the graces they actually *give*. Thus the washing in Baptism signifies the inward washing of the soul from sin. The sacraments always give the graces they signify, provided the recipient puts no obstacles.

It is principally through the sacraments that we obtain the grace of God. They are channels by which grace enters our souls, to feed and nourish them. God gives grace outside the sacraments, in answer to prayer. But only by worthily receiving sacraments can we know definite graces.

How many sacraments are there?—There are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

There are seven sacraments and only seven, no more, no less, for the simple reason that Our Lord instituted seven. These seven sacraments are a gift of love from the Son of God, a gift for which He paid His very life.

2. A sacrament administered to anyone *against his will* is invalid, and will have no sacramental effect.

One of the requisite dispositions for receiving a sacrament is the desire and will to receive it. For infants and those who are unconscious or do not have the use of reason, the intention is supplied by the Church. We take their consent for granted or at the word of their sponsors.

3. *Ceremonies,* although not necessary for the validity of the Sacraments, are used in their administration, in order to make the occasions more solemn and meaningful, and to increase the devotion of the recipient.

Our Lord Himself used ceremonies, as when He spat upon clay and moistened with it the eyes of a blind man.

From whom do the sacraments receive their power to give grace?—The sacraments receive their power to give grace from God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

The sacraments are seven great *streams of grace* flowing from the pierced Heart of Jesus Crucified, to nourish and strengthen our souls. Many men have to suffer, to find food for loved ones and keep them in health. Let us think of Christ, dying on the Cross, suffering to buy grace for our souls!

1. Each sacrament possesses the power from God to make the soul of the recipient holy and pleasing to Him. This supernatural power is termed *sanctifying grace.*

Sanctifying grace is abiding and permanent and lost only by mortal sin. The sacrament that first gives this grace is Baptism. The sacrament that restores this grace to those who have lost it by sin is Penance. The other sacraments give an *increase* of sanctifying grace.

2. Each sacrament also gives a grace proper to itself, a special effect on the soul, distinct from the effects of other sacraments; this is called *sacramental grace.*

Sacramental grace consists in divine help towards the fulfillment of the duties imposed by the particular sacrament. For example, the sacramental grace of Matrimony gives a right to the assistance of God in fulfilling the duties of the married state.

3. If received with the proper dispositions, the sacraments *always* give grace. They derive their efficacy from Christ; consequently they give grace *of themselves,* as long as we have the right dispositions.

The sacraments are sure means of grace, certain means of salvation. By them we are united to Christ Our Lord. By them He gives us His hand to hold to, so that we may walk through life and all its trials without weakness and without fear.

What is the difference betwen sacraments of the living and sacraments of the dead?—Sacraments of the living are those that may be received only by one living in the state of grace; sacraments of the dead aim to give sanctifying grace to one spiritually dead through sin.

1. The sacraments *of the living* are: Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. It is a *sacrilege* to receive these sacraments when one is in the state of mortal sin.

Those who receive sacraments of the living in mortal sin receive the sacraments but not the grace they bring, and commit a sacrilege. The sacramental grace they should receive is suspended until they recover their state of sanctifying grace. When worthily received, sacraments of the living increase the life of grace of the recipient.

2. The sacraments *of the dead* are: Baptism and Penance. Their chief purpose is to restore a soul dead in sin to the life of sanctifying grace.

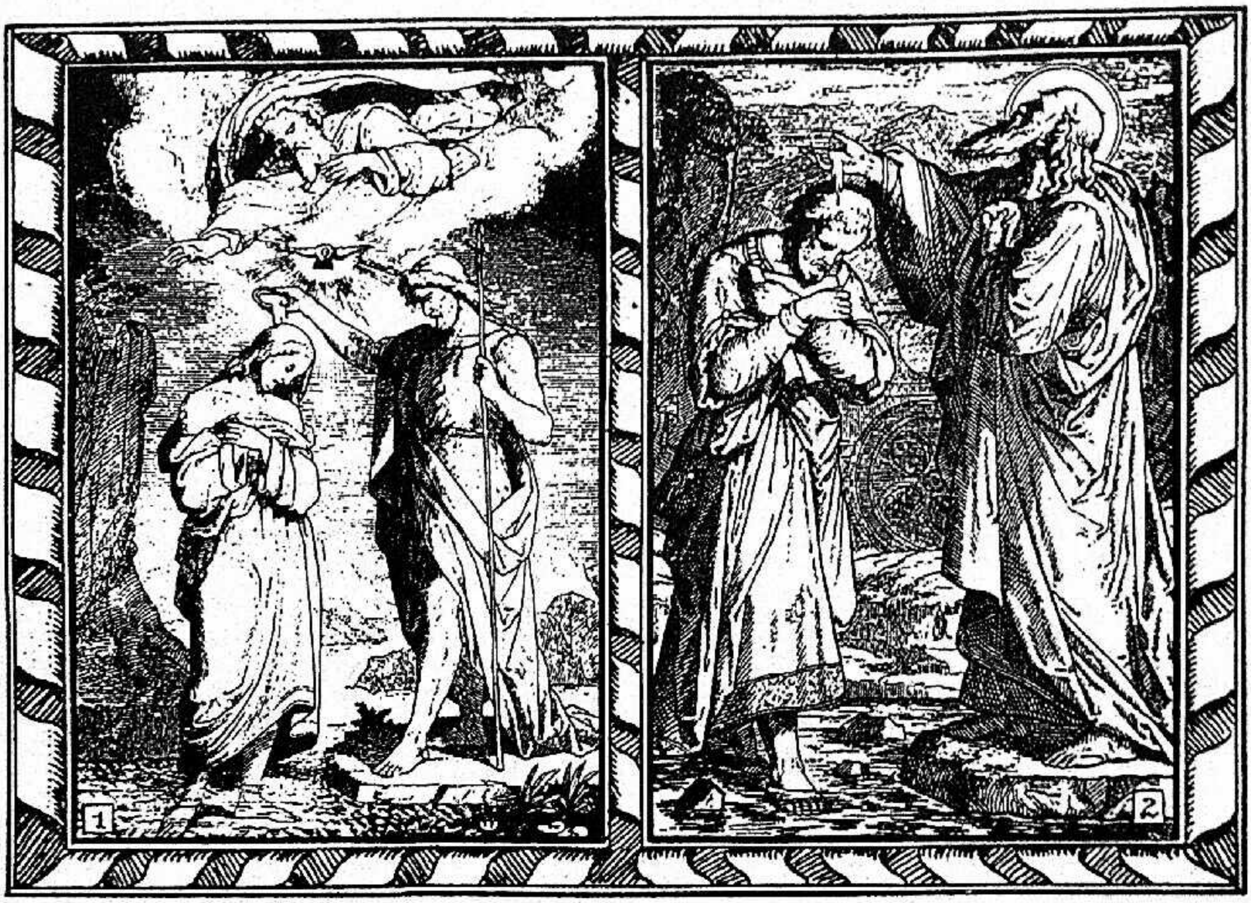
Which are the sacraments that can be received only once?—The sacraments that can be received only once are Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

1. This is because these sacraments imprint on the soul a *spiritual mark* or character, which consists in a special dedication to Christ. This mark is indelible, and is not effaced by anything, not even mortal sin. It will be borne by the soul for all eternity, for its greater glory if in heaven, and for its greater shame if in hell.

The spiritual character imprinted is such that the soul of a baptized person is as different from the soul of the unbaptized as light is different from the dark. A priest will be known as a priest forever, by the mark on his soul, whether he be in heaven or in hell.

2. Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, and Matrimony leave *no indelible mark,* and may be received more than once.

Extreme Unction may be received only once in the same sickness. Matrimony cannot be repeated until one of the parties dies. The more often Penance and Holy Eucharist are received, the better for the soul.



1. The first picture shows Jesus being baptized by St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan, before He began His public life. This baptism was a figure of the sacrament that Christ was to institute later.

2. The Apostles baptized all converts before they were admitted into the Church. On the first Pentecost, three thousand were baptized. Philip, one of the first seven deacons, after instructing the eunuch whom he had met reading the Scriptures, baptized him in a river they were passing.

124. The Sacrament of Baptism

What is Baptism?—Baptism is the sacrament that gives our souls the new life of sanctifying grace by which we become Christians, children of God, and heirs of heaven.

Baptism is the very *first* sacrament we may receive. Unless we are baptized, we are forbidden to receive any other sacraments. Baptism has the three essentials of a sacrament: (a) it was instituted by Christ; (b) it is a sensible sign; and (c) it confers grace.

1. The sacrament of Baptism was *instituted* by Christ at His own Baptism, and commanded at His Ascension.

He said to the Apostles: "Going therefore make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). The Apostles obeyed His command on the very day of Pentecost. In answer to the question of the multitudes, "What shall we do?" after Peter's first sermon, Peter said, "Repent, and *be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). About 3000 persons were baptized.

2. The *matter* and *form* of the sacrament consist in the ablution with water together with the pronouncing of the words: *"I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

Baptism may be validly administered in any of three ways: *Immersion* is plunging the candidate into the water. *Infusion* is pouring the water. *Aspersion* is sprinkling the water.

3. The sacrament of Baptism *confers grace.* We know this from the fact that Christ made it the sacrament of renewal of spirit: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

St. Peter said: "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

What are the effects of Baptism?—Baptism washes us from original sin, at the same time imparting sanctifying grace into our souls; it makes us Christians, children of God, with a right to the kingdom of heaven.

1. Baptism is the only sacrament that can *remit original sin*. It cleanses us from all sin, original and actual, and remits all punishment due.

If an adult receives baptism with the proper dispositions, that is, with faith and contrition, his actual sins are taken away with original sin, as well as all temporal punishment due to his actual sins. Thus if an adult dies immediately after baptism, he goes *straight to heaven*, whatever the sins he may have committed. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

2. When Baptism takes away original sin, it gives our souls the new life of *sanctifying grace*. Thus by Baptism we are born again.

If sanctifying grace is lost after baptism by the commission of mortal sin, it can be regained through the sacrament of penance alone.

3. By Baptism we become *members of the Church* and children of God. We are given the right to enter heaven, and to gain merits by our good works.

By it we are given the right to receive the other sacraments. At the same time we receive sacramental grace which entitles us to actual graces we need to live a Christian life.

4. Baptism imprints an *indelible sign* or *character* on the soul.

This character marks us as Christians, and cannot be removed by anything, even mortal sin. This character prevents the sacrament from being repeated: **we can be baptized only once.** "For all you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

Why is Baptism necessary for the salvation of all men? — Baptism is necessary for the salvation of all men, because Christ has said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

From the time of Christ this has been the unequivocal teaching of the Church. The reason lies in the fact that only Baptism can remit original sin; no one with any taint can enter heaven.

1. Those who through no fault of their own have not received the sacrament of Baptism can be saved through what is called ***baptism of blood*** or ***baptism of desire.***

Either baptism of desire or of blood entitles one to the possession of heaven, just as baptism by water. However, only baptism by water imprints a character on the soul, and so entitles one to the reception of the other sacraments.

(a) An unbaptized person receives the *baptism of blood* when he suffers martyrdom for the faith of Christ.

One who lays down his life for Christ or some Christian virtue is said to have received *baptism of blood*. Our Lord promised, "He who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39). Thus the Holy Innocents whom Herod slew out of hatred for the Infant Jesus received the baptism of blood.

(b) An unbaptized person receives the *baptism of desire* when he loves God above all things, and desires to do all that is necessary for his salvation.

One who loves God above all things, is sorry for his sins, and ardently longs for Baptism when it is impossible to receive it; or one who not knowing the necessity of Baptism, sincerely wishes to do all required for salvation, is said to have received *baptism of desire*. Our Lord promised that whoever loves Him will be loved by the Father (John 14:21). Therefore only those who have attained the use of reason can profit from the baptism of desire.

2. Children should be baptized as soon as possible after birth, if possible, *within a week*. This practice dates from the Apostles.

Except when in danger of death, an infant should not be baptized without the *permission* of a parent or guardian. Children who have come to the age of reason cannot be baptized without their own consent.

(a) *Infants* may receive the baptism of blood, but not the baptism of desire, since they have not as yet the use of reason. However, their lack of Baptism may be supplied in a way we do not know, perhaps even by the desire of the mother. For who has trusted in the Infinite and merciful God, and found Him deaf to supplication?

Some pious Doctors of the Church believe that little babies who die without Baptism may even receive it from an angel. But since this is only pious belief, parents sin mortally if they neglect the Baptism of their children.

(b) Since infants who die unbaptized have committed no sins, they live in a place of *natural happiness* called "limbo".

Catholic parents who put off for a long time, or entirely neglect, the Baptism of their children put them in danger of losing heaven and the vision of God eternally. Although in limbo infants enjoy complete natural happiness surpassing any on earth, such happiness cannot compare with the bliss of heaven, where souls see God face to face. One is natural, the other *supernatural* joy.

SACRAMENTS		MATTER	FORM	MINISTER	
Of The Dead	BAPTISM	Water	"I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."	*Ordinary:* The Priest *Extraordinary* Any Person	Indelible character
	PENANCE	Sins	"I absolve thee from thy sins in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."	The Priest	
Of The Living	CONFIRMATION	Holy Chrism	"I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."	*Ordinary* The Bishop *Extraordinary* A Priest	Indelible character
	HOLY EUCHARIST	Bread and Wine	"For This is My Body. For this is the Chalice of My Blood of the new and eternal testament, the mystery of Faith; which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins."	The Priest	
	EXTREME UNCTION	Holy Oils	"Through this holy unction and through His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever sins thou hast committed by seeing, hearing, etc."	The Priest	
	HOLY ORDERS	Imposition of Hands	*The words which the bishop says to the candidate when imposing hands.*	The Bishop	Indelible character
	MATRIMONY	The contract	*The "I Do," by which both spouses indicate the mutual consent to the contract.*	The Spouses	

This chart shows clearly the various matter, forms, and ministers of each of the seven sacraments. In it may be found which are the sacraments of the living, implying the necessity of being in the state of grace before reception; and which are the sacraments of the dead, not necessitating that state. Baptism cleanses us from all sin, original and actual, and remits all punishment due.

125. Form, Matter and Ministers of Baptism

How is the sacrament of Baptism validly administered?—The sacrament of Baptism is validly administered when with the ablution with water are pronounced the words: *"I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."*

Water is the *matter*, and the words the *form* of Baptism.

1. The *form* must be said at the same time the water is poured, and must be said by the *same person* pouring the water, so that everything takes place as one act.

"You" may be substituted for "thee"; but except for this no other changes may be made. For example, the words "of the Holy Trinity" may not be substituted for "of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost", because Jesus explicitly commanded Baptism to be given "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19).

2. Baptism is *validly administered* whether performed by total immersion, by infusion, or by aspersion. By infusion, the water is poured on the head, forehead, or face. In cases of emergency, it may be poured on any part of the body. The water must *flow on the skin*, of the person being baptized, not merely on the hair. By aspersion, water is sprinkled on the head.

In the time of the Apostles Baptism was usually, though *not exclusively*, conferred by immersion. The first baptisms on Pentecost could not have been by immersion, on account of the great number, three thousand, baptized. All these three methods are valid; but our present practice is by infusion.

3. The water used for solemn Baptism, i.e. when a priest confers it with the ceremonies, is called *baptismal water*. It is

natural water mingled with holy oil and chrism, and blessed with special prayers. Ordinary holy water is *not* baptismal water

Our Lord spoke of "water and the Holy Spirit." Peter baptized Cornelius and his family in water (Acts 10:47); Philip did the same with the eunuch (Acts 8:38). From the Gospel one cannot conclude the use of anything but water in the baptism administered during Apostolic times.

4. In *cases of necessity,* when someone other than a priest administers the baptism, any natural water, such as water from the sea, river, fountain, faucet, rain, or even mineral water, may be used. Holy water may also be used.

Who can administer Baptism? — The priest is the usual minister of Baptism, but if there is danger that someone will die without Baptism, anyone else may and should baptize.

In the early days of the Church, religious instruction preceded Baptism; the candidates for Baptism were called *catechumens.* In those days, solemn baptism was administered on Holy Saturday, on the eve of Whitsunday, and on the eve of the Epiphany. From those early times has come our practice today of having the water for Baptism solemnly blessed on Holy Saturday and on the eve of Pentecost.

1. The bishop or pastor, or a priest properly delegated, is therefore the *ordinary minister* of Baptism. But in cases of necessity, when there is danger of death and an ordinary minister is unavailable, anyone—man, woman, or child, Catholic or non-Catholic, atheist or pagan—may and should baptize; that person then becomes the *extraordinary minister* of Baptism.

When properly given, lay baptism is as valid as baptism given by a priest. In order to baptize validly, natural fresh water or holy water is poured on the head, face, or body of the person being baptized, and *at the same time* the words are pronounced: *"I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."*

2. If a person baptized by an *extraordinary minister* survives, he cannot be baptized again. However, he is taken to the church, and the ceremonies that had been omitted are supplied.

No one may baptize himself. A witness to a lay baptism should be present, but this is not of necessity.

3. Baptism administered by a *Protestant* minister is valid if properly performed: that is, with the use of water, together with the form of Baptism, and having the intention to do what the Church does.

Conditional baptism is given when it is uncertain whether a person has been baptized, or when there is fear of the sacrament having been administered improperly, as with converted Protestants.

4. Children should be baptized *in the parochial church* to which their parents belong, because the registration should be made there.

In case a child is baptized in a hospital, at home, or elsewhere, in some other church, the parish priest should be notified.

5. After Baptism, a *certificate* is given containing the names of the child, of his parents, of his godparents, the dates of birth, of Baptism, and the place of Baptism.

This is the *baptismal certificate.* It should be very carefully kept, as later it will be needed for the sacrament of Confirmation. The certificate is also necessary for marriage, holy orders, or entrance into a religious community. Parents should tell their children when and where they were baptized, so that even should the certificate be lost and the parents die, the registration may be traced.

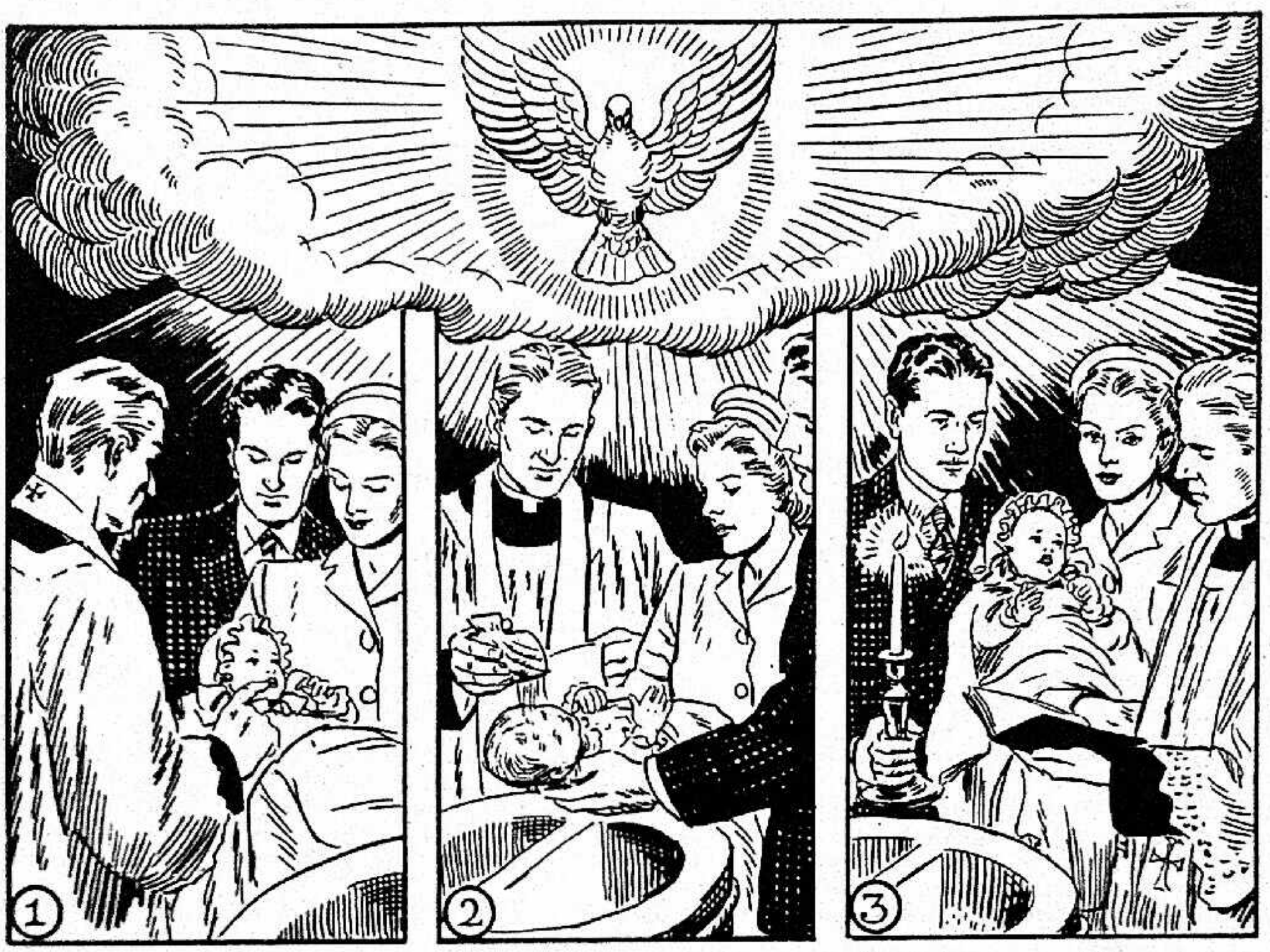
Why is the name of a saint given in Baptism?—The name of a saint is given in Baptism in order that the person baptized may imitate his virtues, and have him for a protector.

1. The names of *angels* are also given, as well as names referring to mysteries or sacred appellations, events, and doctrines.

In certain countries it is a practice, even when another baptismal name is given, to include for girls the name Mary, and for boys the name Joseph; for example: Mary Louise, Joseph Francis, etc.

2. The Church *does not approve* of heathen or fantastical names, such as combinations taken from a film or novel, or made up from various words.

Some name their children after pagan gods and goddesses, flowers, places, or some wealthy or prominent relative's surname. We hear of Ceres and Europa as names inflicted on poor little girls, when they could have been named after the angels and saints that behold God face to face! What is the most beautiful flower on earth compared to a Saint of God, who can protect and pray for the child! We hear of little boys named with the surname of some figure prominent in politics or finance, instead of the name of an angel or saint, as the Archangel Michael, this flame of God that thrust the rebel hordes into hell.



The essential part of Baptism is the pouring of water (2) together with the saying of the words of baptism. At that moment the godparents must be touching the child. Blessed salt is put in the child's mouth (1) to signify wisdom received through Baptism. A lighted candle is given to the person baptized, or if an infant, to the sponsors (3), to denote the light of the Holy Ghost received.

126. Ceremonies and Sponsors in Baptism

What ceremonies are used in Baptism? —The ceremonies used in Baptism are summarized as follows:

1. *Reception of the candidate.* At the church door the candidate is questioned as to his purpose in wishing admission into the Church. He is told what such admission involves. He is commanded to keep the commandments, to love God and his neighbor. The priest then *breathes* three times upon his face to signify the spiritual breath of life that is to be infused into his soul, *signs* him with the cross to show that he is henceforth to belong to Christ, imposes his hand on him as a sign that the Church takes him as a ward, and then puts blessed *salt*, symbol of spiritual wisdom, in his mouth.

The exorcisms follow, by which the devil is cast out, with his power over the soul of the candidate. The priest signs the forehead with a cross, as a seal, and commends the soul to God.

2. *Admittance into the church or baptistery.* The priest then lays his stole on the child as a sign of his ecclesiastical powers, and leads him into the baptistery, that he may have part with Christ in everlasting life. The godparents and the priest, together with the candidate if he already is an adult, recite the "Apostles' Creed" and the "Our Father" in sign of acceptance of the Faith.

Prayers of exorcism are read to break the power of Satan over the child. The priest touches the ears and nostrils of the candidate with his moistened thumb, to signify that the hearing should be opened to the Word of God, and that the candidate should live in the odor of sanctity.

3. *The baptismal vows.* The candidate's good will is tested in the baptismal vows, in

which he renounces Satan "and all his works and pomps", that is, all sins and all occasions of sin.

If the person baptized is an infant, his godparents take the baptismal vows for him, in his name. These vows take the form of answers to six questions concerning the renunciation of Satan and all his works and pomps, and belief in the chief doctrines of the Christian faith. Then the candidate is anointed with the oil of catechumens, touched on the breast that wisdom may thrive in his heart, and on the shoulders, that he may patiently bear the yoke of Christ. Then the priest changes his violet stole for a white one, to show that the separation from God of the soul is about to give way to a life of grace. Follows the profession of faith, a reiteration of the Apostles' Creed, and formal petition for Baptism.

4. *The main act.* The priest pours the baptismal water three times upon the head of the candidate in the form of the cross, at the same time pronouncing the words: "(*Name of candidate*), I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

At this actual moment of Baptism, the godparents must touch the candidate, to show that they incur and accept the spiritual relationship.

5. *Anointing with chrism.* After the pouring of water the person is anointed with chrism on the crown of the head, to show that he is now anointed of God.

A white garment is placed upon him to show that his soul is now spotless with grace. A lighted candle is put in his hand to impress upon him that he should ever keep burning in his heart the light of faith and virtue. And finally the newly baptized child of God is dismissed, with the blessings of God and the Church.

What do we promise through our godparents in Baptism?—We promise through our godparents in Baptism to renounce the devil, and to live according to the teachings of Christ and of His Church.

The godparents make the responses for an infant being baptized. These are called the baptismal vows. By them the person renounces Satan and all his works and pomps; that is, sin and all occasions.

1. To the first three questions, we reply through our godparents in Baptism, "I do renounce him (*or* them)." To the last three questions we reply, "I do believe."

(1) Dost thou renounce Satan? (2) And all his works? (3) And all his pomps? (4) Dost thou believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth? (5) Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was born and Who suffered for us? (6) Dost thou believe also in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

2. We should renew the baptismal vows on our First Communion. It is also praiseworthy to renew them every year on New Year's Day or on the Epiphany, and after a mission or spiritual retreat.

What is the duty of a godparent after Baptism?—The duty of a godparent after Baptism is to see that the child is brought up a good Catholic, if this is not done by the parents.

1. In solemn baptism there must be at least one godparent, of the same sex as the one baptized. It is permitted to have two sponsors: a godfather and a godmother.

It is *not permitted* to have more than two godparents, and these two must be of different sexes. Others who may be present are only witnesses. The godfather must be at least 14 years old; the godmother must be at least 12 years old.

2. A godparent has the duty of looking upon the baptized person as his *spiritual child,* of providing for him, when necessary, the proper religious education, and of guarding him spiritually even when he is grown.

For this reason, those who neither know nor practice their Catholic faith should not be chosen for godparents. Too many people pick godparents for their children for reasons other than spiritual.

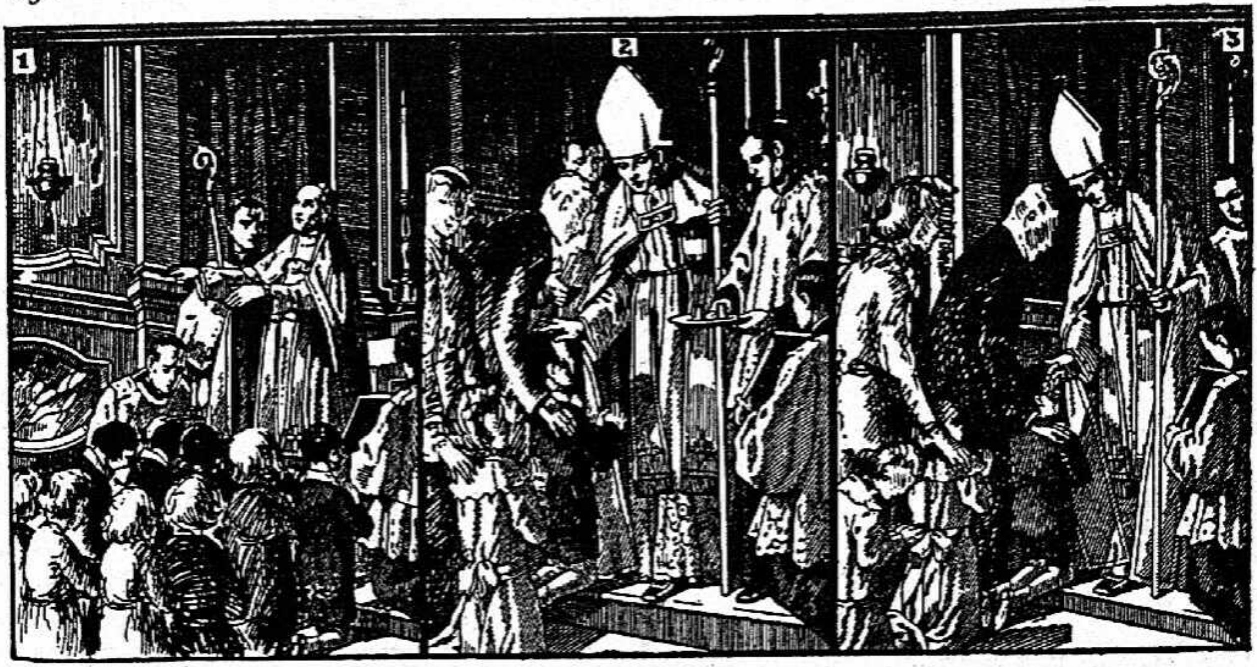
3. A spiritual relationship is established between the person baptized and his sponsor, as well as between him and the one who baptizes him.

This relationship, called *spiritual affinity,* forbids marriage between the persons thus related. No spiritual affinity is contracted between the godfather and the godmother of a person, nor between his parents and his godparents.

4. If the person chosen godparent *cannot be present* at the Baptism, another can act in his place: that is, he can be sponsor by *proxy.* The absent godparent must, however, have the intention of being godparent.

Who should be chosen as godparents for Baptism?—Only Catholics who know their faith and live up to the duties of their religion should be chosen as godparents for Baptism.

A godparent is supposed to be a practical Catholic. Non-Catholics, Masons, those who married out of the Church, and all other excommunicated persons cannot be sponsors.



The ceremonies of Confirmation begin by the Bishop extending his hands over those to be confirmed (1), invoking the Holy Ghost. He signs with the sign of the cross the forehead of each separately with chrism (2), pronouncing the words of confirmation. He gives the person a slight blow on the cheek (3) to remind him to be ready to suffer all things, even death, for his faith.

127. The Sacrament of Confirmation

What is Confirmation?—Confirmation is the sacrament through which the Holy Ghost comes to us in a special way and enables us to profess our faith as strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

It is of common belief that Confirmation was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

1. Confirmation in a very special manner brings us the *Holy Ghost* with His sevenfold gifts. "Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17).

Confirmation for the Christians may be likened to the day of *Pentecost* for the Apostles, when they received the Holy Ghost under sensible signs: tongues as of fire, and a mighty wind. The Apostles themselves administered the sacrament of Confirmation, as at Samaria and Ephesus. "And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them" (Acts 19:6).

2. Any *baptized* Christian may be confirmed. Although the sacrament is not necessary for salvation, it is sinful to neglect it, as it confers many graces.

"The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5). By Confirmation we become soldiers of Christ, for it strengthens us in the profession of our faith. "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

3. We should receive the sacrament of Confirmation at the *age* when we pass from childhood to youth. At that period all kinds of temptations surround us, and we need special strength from God to resist them.

In the early days of the Church, it was the custom to confirm very young children. The sacrament of Confirmation is today delayed in order that the recipient may first have a basis of knowledge of the fundamentals of faith. Even when Confirmation is administered to infants and very young children, they truly receive the sacrament. The age is a matter of discipline in particular dioceses.

What is necessary to receive Confirmation properly?—To receive Confirmation properly, it is necessary to be in the state of grace, and to know well the chief truths and duties of our religion.

1. For Confirmation, a *knowledge* of the chief truths and duties of our religion is required. This is why, if a person who is to be confirmed has reached the age of reason, he is examined as to these truths when he goes to confession before Confirmation.

The Commandments, common prayers, and the Apostles' Creed are the basis of any examination in religion; any Catholic who can explain clearly the fundamentals of the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed knows his faith sufficiently, for Confirmation.

2. Confirmation is a sacrament *of the living*. Therefore when one who has reached the age of reason is to be confirmed, he must first go to confession if burdened with mortal sin, in order to be in a state of grace.

The person to be confirmed should obtain the *permit* for Confirmation. He must go to the church properly dressed. He must go early; when many are to be confirmed, the doors are closed before the beginning of the ceremonies, to prevent the entrance of latecomers.

3. When the bishop approaches, the person to be confirmed must *kneel*. Children may stand. The sponsor stands behind, with the right hand on the shoulder of the person to be confirmed. There is *only one sponsor*, of the same sex as the one confirmed.

The person confirmed must not leave the church before the whole ceremony is finished. He must attend with respect and devotion.

In what does the sacrament of Confirmation consist?—The sacrament of Confirmation consists in the anointing with chrism on the forehead, and at the same time the pronouncing of the words: *"I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

These are the ***matter*** and ***form*** of the sacrament.

1. Holy *chrism* is a mixture of olive oil and balm, blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday. By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant that the Catholic who is confirmed must always be ready to profess his faith openly and to practice it fearlessly.

The cross marked on our foreheads at Confirmation reminds us never to be ashamed to profess ourselves disciples of a crucified Saviour. We must profess our religion openly whenever we cannot keep silence without breaking some law of God or of the Church; for example, when we are challenged to make profession of our faith, when the Church is being attacked.

2. The bishop is the usual ***minister*** of Confirmation.

Sometimes, however, the Holy See gives missionary priests the power to administer this sacrament; but the oil used must have been consecrated by a bishop. Pastors and administrators of parishes are granted the faculty of administering Confirmation, as *extraordinary ministers*, to those among their flock and others in their territory who are in danger of death

3. After the anointing with chrism, the bishop gives the person confirmed a slight blow on the cheek, saying, "Peace be with you!" This is done in order to remind him that he must be ready to suffer everything, even death, for the sake of Christ.

Finally the bishop gives all his *blessing*. Then those who have been confirmed or their godparents say the Credo, "Our Father," and "Hail Mary."

4. Those in charge should take care that proper *registration* takes place after Confirmation.

When a person is confirmed outside his own parish, notification must be sent to the parish where he was baptized.

5. After our Confirmation, we should continue to study our religion even more earnestly than before, so that we may be able to explain and defend our faith.

In these days of spreading paganism and naturalism, God needs soldiers to defend His faith. And we cannot be of much use in the defense of the faith if we ourselves do not know it.

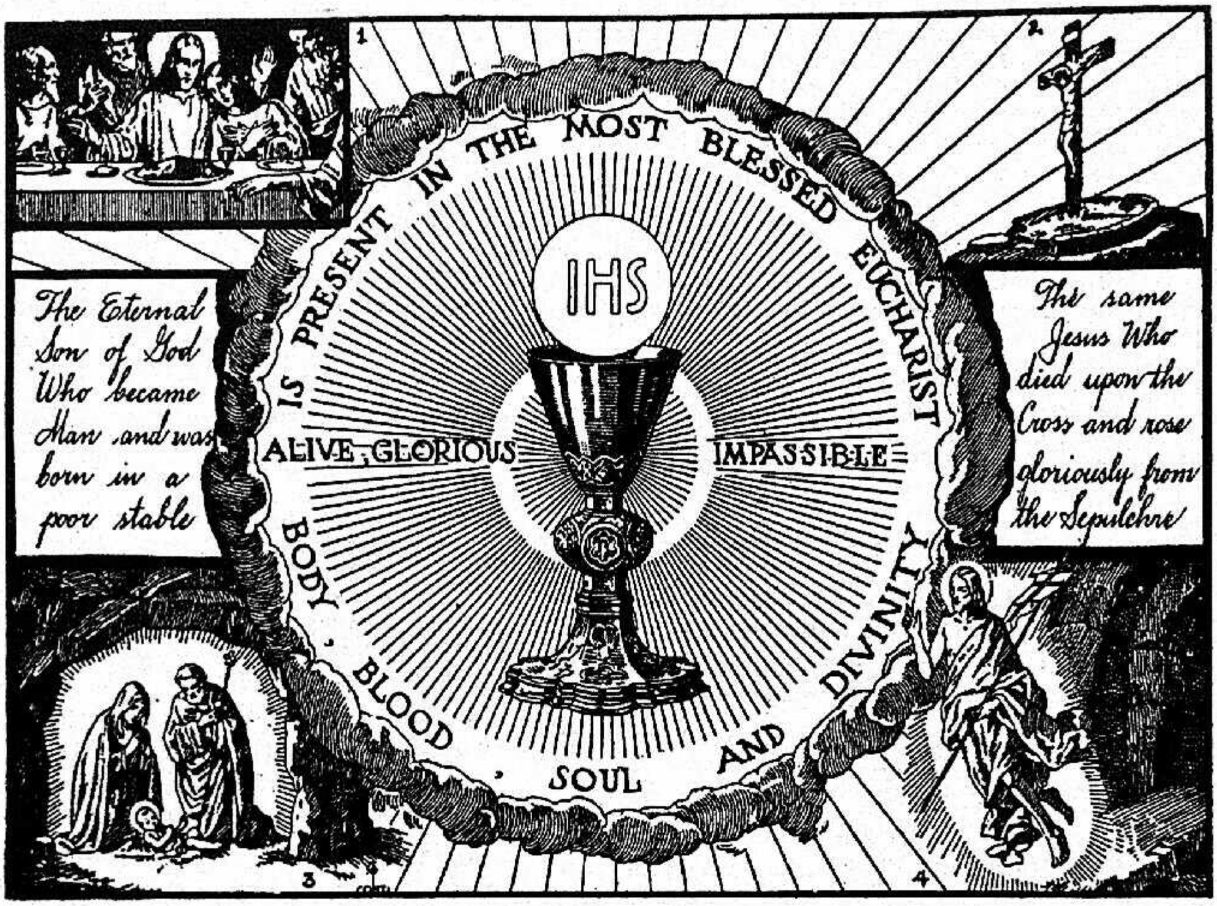
What are the effects of Confirmation?—Confirmation increases sanctifying grace, gives its special sacramental grace, and imprints a lasting character on the soul.

1. Confirmation creates within us a spirit of *meekness*. It increases our love of God and our neighbor. It enlightens our understanding. strengthens our will, preserves our soul from sin, and inclines our heart to virtue. The *sacramental grace* of Confirmation helps us to live our faith loyally and to profess it courageously.

As Baptism makes us temples of the Holy Ghost, Confirmation gives us the plenitude of His graces.

2. The *character* of Confirmation is a spiritual and indelible sign which marks the Christian as a soldier in the army of Christ.

Because Confirmation imprints an *indelible character* on the soul, it may be received only once. As a soldier of Christ, a confirmed person is given a sense of the worthlessness of the goods and pleasures of earth; his thoughts are directed towards the supernatural; in other words, he is given the capacity to become a perfect Christian.


1
2
3
4
IS PRESENT IN THE MOST BLESSED EUCHARIST
IHS
ALIVE, GLORIOUS
IMPASSIBLE
BODY, BLOOD, SOUL AND DIVINITY
The Eternal Son of God Who became Man and was born in a poor stable
The same Jesus Who died upon the Cross and rose gloriously from the Sepulchre

At the Consecration at Mass, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Sacrament that Jesus instituted at the Last Supper (1).

In the Blessed Eucharist is the same Person who was born in Bethlehem (3), crucified on Calvary (2), and rose gloriously from the dead on the first Easter morning (4).

128. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

What is the Holy Eucharist?—The Holy Eucharist is a sacrament and a sacrifice in which Our Saviour Jesus Christ, body and blood, soul and divinity, is contained, offered, and received under the appearances of bread and wine.

Eucharist in Greek means *thanksgiving.* The sacrament is so called because when Christ instituted it, He gave thanks. Today, it is the chief means by which we give thanks to God.

1. The Holy Eucharist is also called the ***Blessed Sacrament,*** because it is the most excellent of all sacraments. It gives us Christ Himself. "My delight is to be with the children of men" (Prov. 8:31).

It is called the ***Sacrament of the Altar,*** because it is consecrated and reserved upon an altar. It is offered up on the altar in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The Holy Eucharist is called ***Holy Communion*** when it is received, usually in church. It is called ***Holy Viaticum*** when it is received during a serious illness, or at the hour of death.

The Holy Eucharist is also called the Bread of heaven, and the Bread of angels,—this because in it God Himself comes down from heaven to be our food, thus making us like unto the angels.

How did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist? — Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist in this way: He took bread, blessed and broke it, and giving it to His Apostles, said: *"Take and eat; this is My body";* then He took a cup of wine, blessed it, and giving it to them, said: *"All of you drink of this; for this is My blood of the new covenant which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins";* finally, He gave His

Apostles the commission: "Do this in remembrance of Me."

1. When Our Lord said, "This is My body," the entire substance of the bread was *changed* into His body; and when He said, "This is My blood," the entire substance of the wine was changed into His blood.

In the Holy Eucharist, we find the *three essentials* of a sacrament. The institution took place at the Last Supper; the visible sign is the matter of bread and of wine, while the audible sign consisting in the words of Our Lord is the form; the grace granted is the receiving of the very body and blood of the Living Christ.

2. After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed, only the *appearances* of bread and wine remained.

By the *appearances* of bread and wine we mean their color, taste, weight, shape, and whatever else appears to the senses.

Why do we believe that Christ changed bread and wine into His own Body and Blood?—We believe that Christ changed bread and wine into His own Body and Blood, because:

1. His words clearly say so. At the Last Supper He said: *"This is My Body,"* not "This is a symbol of My Body," or "This represents My Body."

"And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take and eat; *this is my body.*" And taking a cup, he gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, "All of you drink of this; for *this is my blood* of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28).

2. Previously, on the day after the first multiplication of the loaves and fishes, Our Lord had *promised* to give His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. On this occasion, it is clear that the Jews took Our Lord's words *literally*. Many of the disciples left Jesus and "walked no more with Him," because they could not believe such a thing as He promised. But Jesus, although very sad at their leaving, did not take back His words or explain them differently.

"'I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, and have died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that if anyone eat of it he will not die. I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.'

"The Jews on that account argued with one another, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

"Jesus therefore said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, *unless you eat the flesh* of the Son of Man, and *drink his blood*, you shall not have life in you. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also shall live because of me. This is the bread that has come down from heaven; not as your fathers ate the manna, and died. He who eats this bread shall live forever.'" (John 6:48-59).

3. The *Apostles understood* that Christ meant His words at the Last Supper to be literal. St. Paul writes:

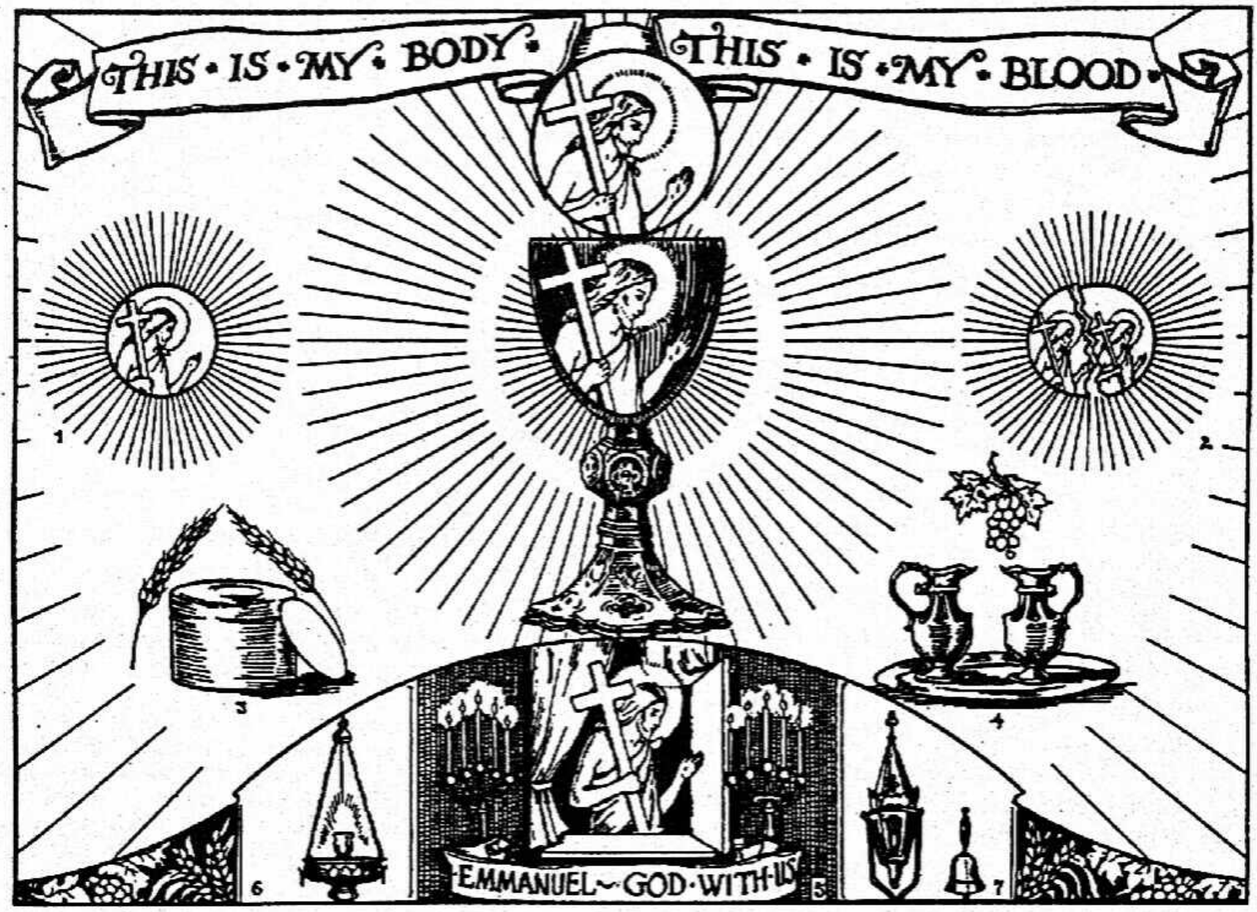
"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the sharing of the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? . . . Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the cup; for he who eats and drinks unworthily, without distinguishing the body, eats and drinks judgment to himself" (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:27-29).

4. It has been the *continuous belief* of Christians from the beginning of Christianity. St. Augustine said, "Our Lord held Himself in His own hands, when He gave His Body to the disciples." It was only in the sixteenth century that Protestants, breaking away from the True Church, denied it and introduced a different doctrine.

The churches which *separated* in the early centuries from the Catholic Church all believe in the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist as being the very Body and Blood of Christ.

How was Our Lord able to change bread and wine into His body and blood?—Our Lord was able to change bread and wine into His body and blood by His almighty power.

If God made the universe out of nothing, He certainly could change bread and wine into His Body and Blood. Christ Himself changed water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana, by a mere act of His Divine Will. Every day we can see the results of God's power in the miracle of growth: people grow, the trees grow; inanimate or dead matter is assimilated as food and continues as living beings or vegetation,—all by the power of God. He, the uncreated One, can do anything He wills. Can we doubt that He worked the change in the bread and wine, if He Himself told us so?



In the Holy Eucharist Our Lord is present whole and entire, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. When the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle (5), a sanctuary lamp (6) is kept burning before it.

129. The Real Presence

When did Christ give His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood?—Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood when He made the Apostles priests at the Last Supper by saying to them: "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Thus He commanded them and their successors to renew till the end of time what He had just performed. This change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church by Jesus Christ, through His priests.

How do priests exercise their power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ? — Priests exercise their power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ by repeating at the consecration of the Mass the words of Christ: "This is My body. . . . this is My blood."

Over the bread are pronounced the words: *Hoc est enim corpus meum,* "For this is My Body." Over the wine are pronounced the words: *Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei,* "For this is the chalice of My Blood."

1. At Mass, at the words of consecration, ***transubstantiation*** takes place; that is, the entire substance of the bread and wine is changed into our Lord's Body and Blood.

After the words of consecration, there is *no longer* any bread or wine on the altar, for they have been changed into Christ's Body and Blood. If it be asked how transubstantiation can possibly be effected, we reply, "By the almighty power of God."

2. The *appearances* of bread and wine remain. The consecrated Host continues to look like bread, tastes and feels like bread; but it is not bread, for the entire substance of bread is changed into Christ's Body.

The same thing is true of the consecrated chalice, which continues to look, smell, and taste like wine, but there is no more wine, only Christ's Blood.

If Jesus Christ whole and entire both under the appearances of bread, and under the appearances of wine? — Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the appearances of bread and under the appearances of wine.

1. In the Holy Eucharist Christ is *present* wholly, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

A little child preparing for her first Holy Communion was asked the difference between a crucifix and the Blessed Sacrament. "Why," the innocent child answered, "the crucifix looks like Our Lord, but it is not He. The Blessed Sacrament does not look like Our Lord, but It is He Himself!"

2. Christ is *whole and entire* under the appearances of bread *or* wine. As Christ's Body is a living body, and a living body has blood, so Christ's Blood is there wherever His Body is.

Where Christ's living Body and Blood are, there also must be His soul, for the body and blood cannot live without the soul. And where Christ's Soul is, there also is His Divinity, which cannot be separated from His humanity.

3. Christ is whole and entire *in each part* of the Host and in each drop in the chalice. When the Host is broken, the Body of Christ is not broken, but He exists whole and entire in each fragment.

In a similar way, even when we break a mirror into many pieces, each piece reflects our face.

4. Christ's Body and Blood are present in the consecrated species *as long as* the appearances of bread and wine remain.

When, therefore, we receive Holy Communion, we bear within us, as long as the appearances of bread remain, the Living Christ, Son of God.

Why does Christ give us His own body and blood in the Holy Eucharist?—Christ gives us His own body and blood in the Holy Eucharist:

1. To be offered as a *sacrifice* commemorating and renewing the sacrifice of the cross.

"For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). In the Mass Jesus offers Himself as a Victim to His heavenly Father.

2. To be received in *Holy Communion.*

"I am the bread of life . . . He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me, and I in him . . . He who eats me, he also shall live because of me" (John 6:48, 56, 58). The Holy Eucharist is food to nourish the soul. By this food we are united to Christ, Who nourishes us with His divine life; sanctifying grace and all virtues increase in our souls; our evil inclinations are lessened. The Holy Eucharist is a pledge of everlasting life: "If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever." Holy Communion needs the Mass to supply the consecrated species; for this reason Mass and Communion are inseparable.

3. To remain ever on our altars as a *proof* of His love, and to be worshipped by us.

"Remain with us, Lord, for with Thee is the fountain of life" (Ps. 35:10). "Come to Me, all you who labor, and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). We say we love Jesus; do we prove our love? When we have a dear friend, we are ever eager to be in his presence; do we show Jesus the same loving tenderness? Or are we so forgetful of Him that we go to see Him only once a week?

Since Christ's Real Presence is in the Eucharist, what honor are we bound to render It?—We are bound to render the Holy Eucharist the same adoration and honor due God Himself.

1. It is a most *wonderful privilege* to have Christ actually present every moment of the day and night.

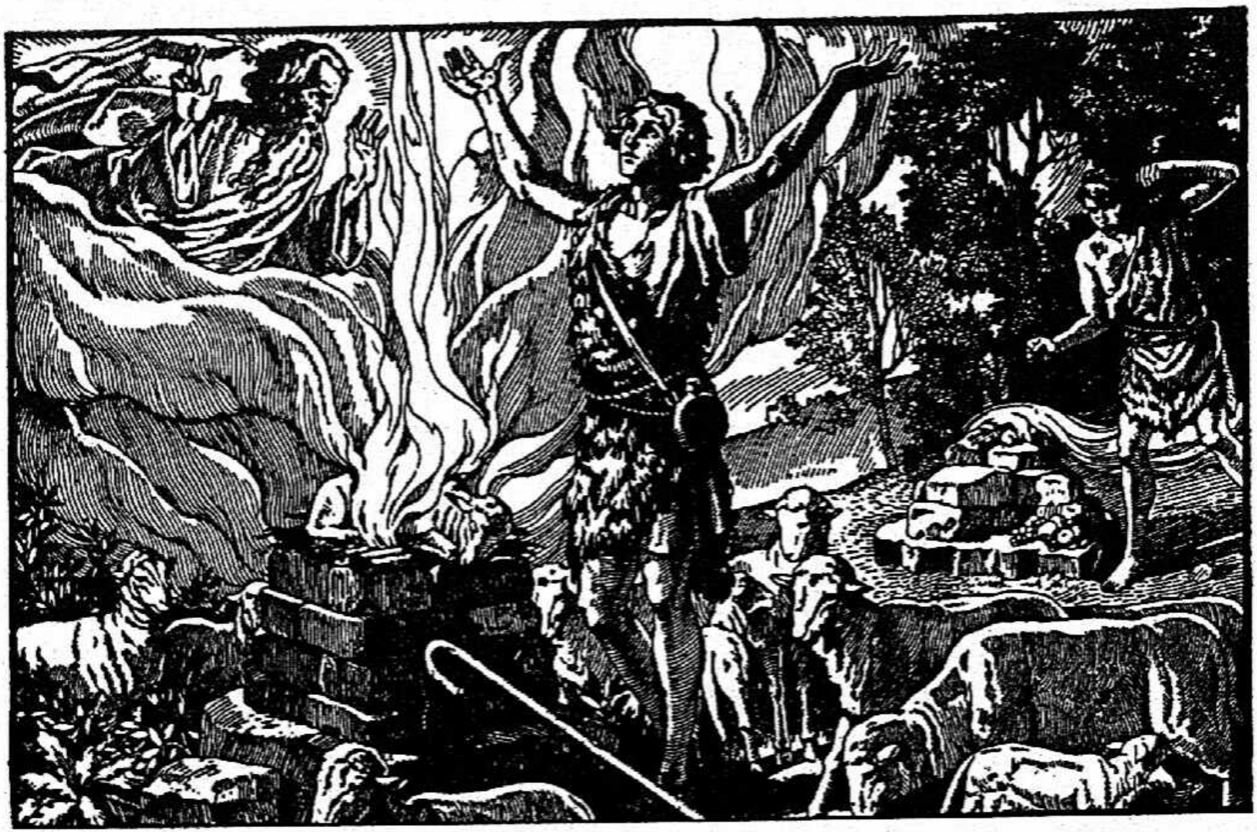
When the Blessed Sacrament is in the tabernacle, it is covered with a curtain or veil, and a sanctuary lamp is kept burning before it. When we enter or leave the church, we should genuflect on the *right* knee towards the tabernacle, as a sign of adoration.

2. This is why the *tabernacle* is the most precious part of a church. Special care should be taken to keep the altar linen clean; in most parishes there are altar societies of women who devote part of their time to the care of altar linen, vestments, etc.

The Holy Father gives us good example. The chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in the Basilica of St. Peter's is precious, with its unique tabernacle. Dozens of vigil lights burn day and night before Our Lord, as prayers for His people.

3. We can *show Jesus our love* and gratitude by every day paying Him a visit in the Blessed Sacrament, by attending Benediction, by hearing Holy Mass and receiving Holy Communion, by spending an hour of adoration when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, and by other devotions.

When we pass by a church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, we should bow our heads as a sign of respect, and say a short aspiration in honor of Our Lord; men should raise their hats. If we are not ill-bred enough to pass by a friend without a word or gesture of greeting, shall we be thus ill-bred towards Our Lord!



From the beginning of man's existence, sacrifices have been offered to God. The children of Adam and Eve, Abel and Cain, offered sacrifice to God. Abel offered sheep; Cain, fruits of the earth.

130. Nature and History of Sacrifice

What is a sacrifice?—A sacrifice is the offering of a victim by a priest to God alone, and the destruction of it in some way, to acknowledge that He is the Creator and Lord of all things.

1. Man offers sacrifice to God, in *acknowledgment* of His supreme power, and in *gratitude* for His gifts, especially for the gift of life. The need for offering sacrifice is innate in human nature, as natural as breathing. Since man was made for God, his soul flies to Him if unchecked, as a balloon soars up into the air unless tied down.

God gave us life; He breathed into us a soul that is immortal, like God Himself. Without life and a soul, we would be nonexistent, nothing; we would not be able to do anything, not even to recognize God. Our life and soul therefore is our most precious possession, and for it we must thank God.

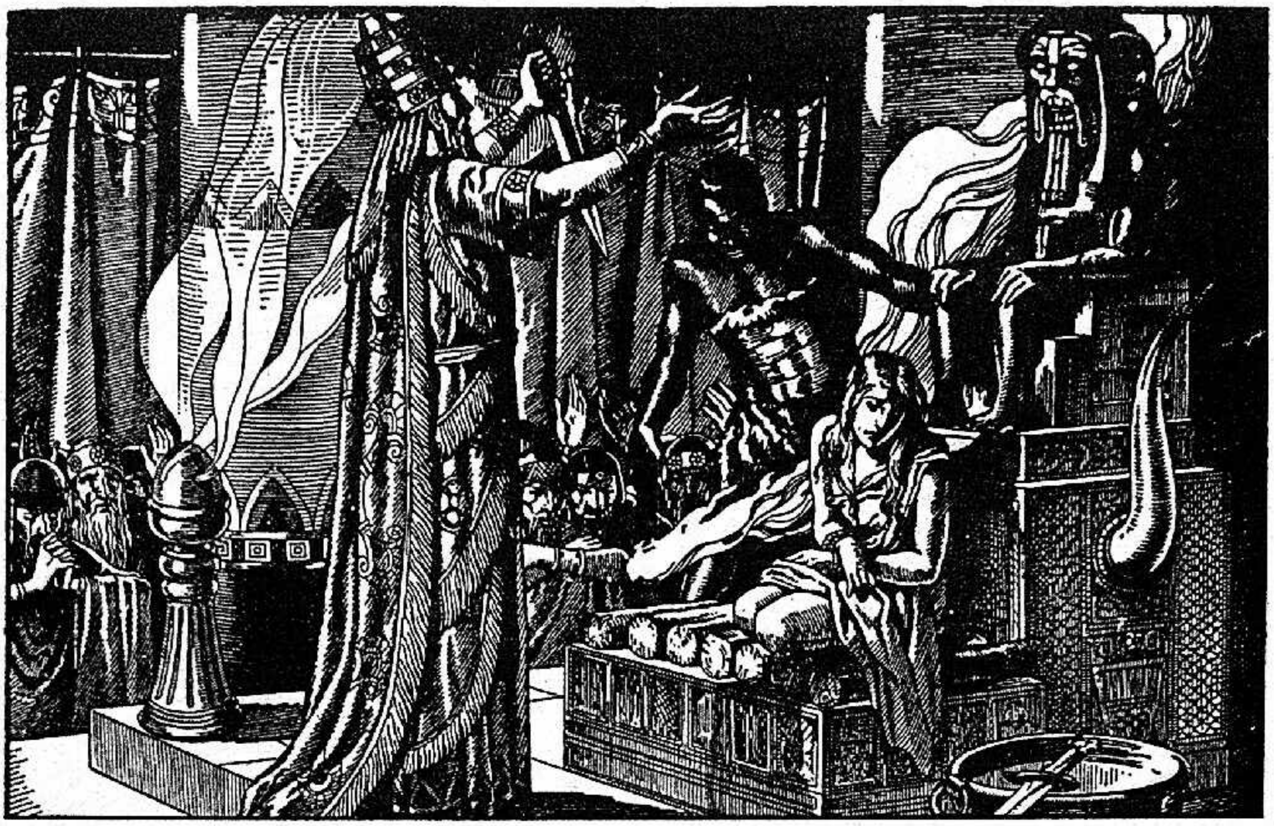
2. We must *repay* God for His gifts, especially for the invaluable gift of life.

But because our life is so precious, we cannot give God enough for it, to repay him. If someone gave us a diamond ring worth five thousand dollars, and we gave him two cents in payment, that would not be as great a difference between the value of what we receive and the amount we pay as there would be when God gives us life and we repay Him with material things. But because we have nothing with which we can repay God adequately, we do our best, by offering Him what we can. This is what men do when they offer *sacrifice.*

3. From the very beginning of the world, men have acknowledged God's existence and power by *offering sacrifice.* It was first offered, then destroyed or changed, as by consuming or by fire. The oblation of a visible object is a symbol of the interior adoration and offering, by which the soul gives itself completely to its Creator.

In common language we speak of "sacrificing" for the sake of another: for example, a mother sacrifices herself for her children, a soldier sacrifices himself for his country. The meaning is that some valuable thing is given up—time, luxuries, health, life—for the sake of another. So in offering a *sacrifice* to God, we give it up, for love of Him.

4. The offering of sacrifice is an honor *reserved* to God alone, since the formal act of offering and destroying an oblation is an



Because they did not have a knowledge of the true God, the ancient Greeks and Egyptians offered human sacrifices. The Caananites used to offer human victims to their idol Moloch, heating the brazen statue of the god red-hot, and casting the victims into its arms. Even today some pagan peoples offer human sacrifices. Thus we see how perversion enters when the true God is not known.

act of worship or adoration. In order to make a solemn religious act of sacrifice to God, men have from earliest days asked priests, those consecrated to the service of God, to offer their sacrifices, to be the intermediary between man and God.

In ordinary life, we offer valuable things to those we love or respect, as a sign of gratitude or affection. In this way we give Christmas and birthday presents, commemoration gifts, etc. But these offerings are a "sacrifice" only in the common sense of the term, and are not included in the formal sacrifice that can be offered to God alone. This last is the offering and destroying or changing of something, in acknowledgment of God's infinite majesty.

What are the purposes of sacrifice?— The purposes of sacrifice are: to give honor or adoration to God, to offer Him thanks, to beg a favor, or to make propitiation.

In other words, the purposes of sacrifice are: *adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and atonement.* It is natural for man to give outward expression to the feelings that move his interior being. For this reason he bursts out in praise when he thinks of the greatness and holiness of God; he must give something up as a sign of gratitude; he must offer a gift when he feels his insignificance in begging a favor; and he tries all kinds of penitential works when he realizes his iniquities.

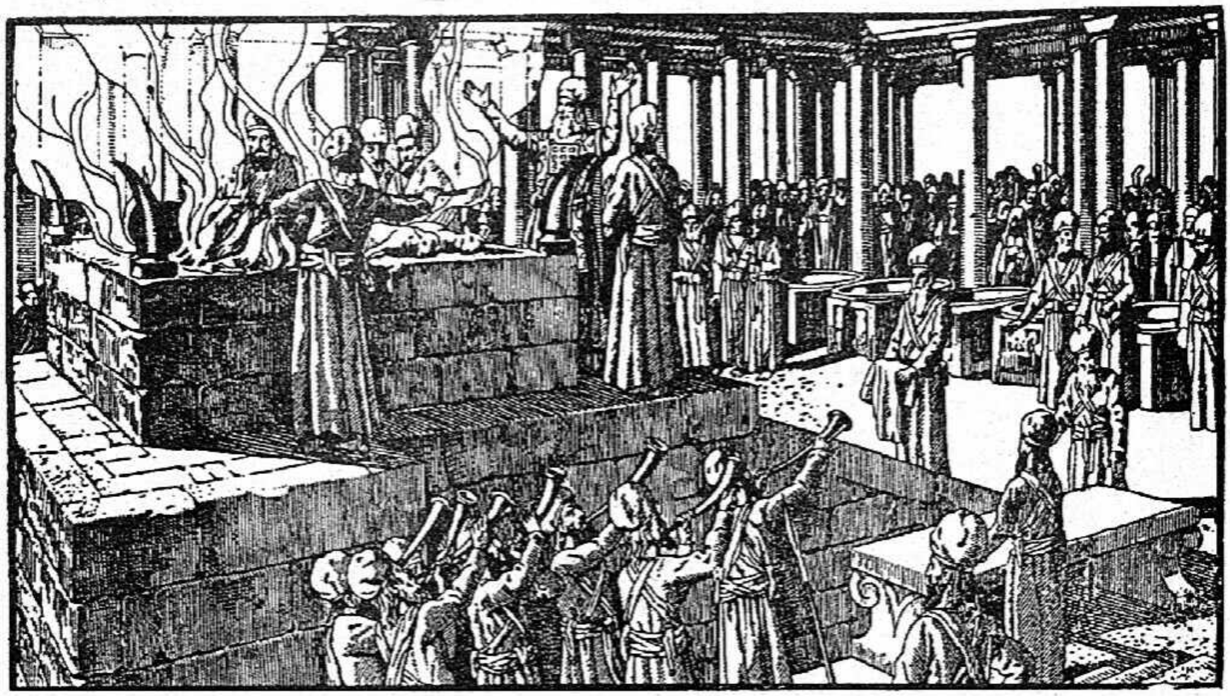
In what forms is sacrifice offered?— Sacrifice is offered in either the bloody or he unbloody form.

1. A sacrifice of living animals, such as an ox, a lamb, or a dove, is a *bloody* sacrifice. A sacrifice of some food, such as fruit, wine, or wheat, is an *unbloody* sacrifice.

Among the Jews, the animals used to be slaughtered, their blood poured out upon the altar, and their flesh consumed by fire or eaten by the priests and those for whom the sacrifice was offered. The unbloody oblation was burned up or eaten by the priests after being offered; the wine was poured out on the altar.

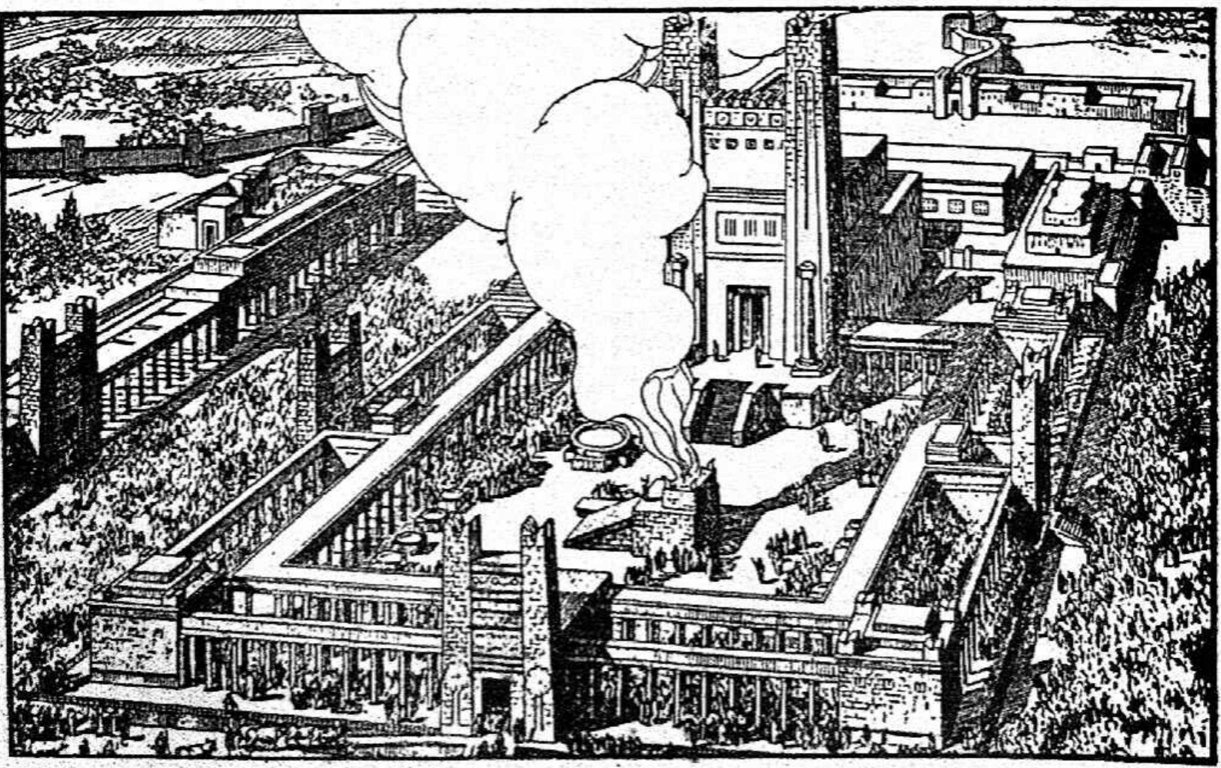
2. The heathen, with perverted ideas, offered human sacrifices to their idols.

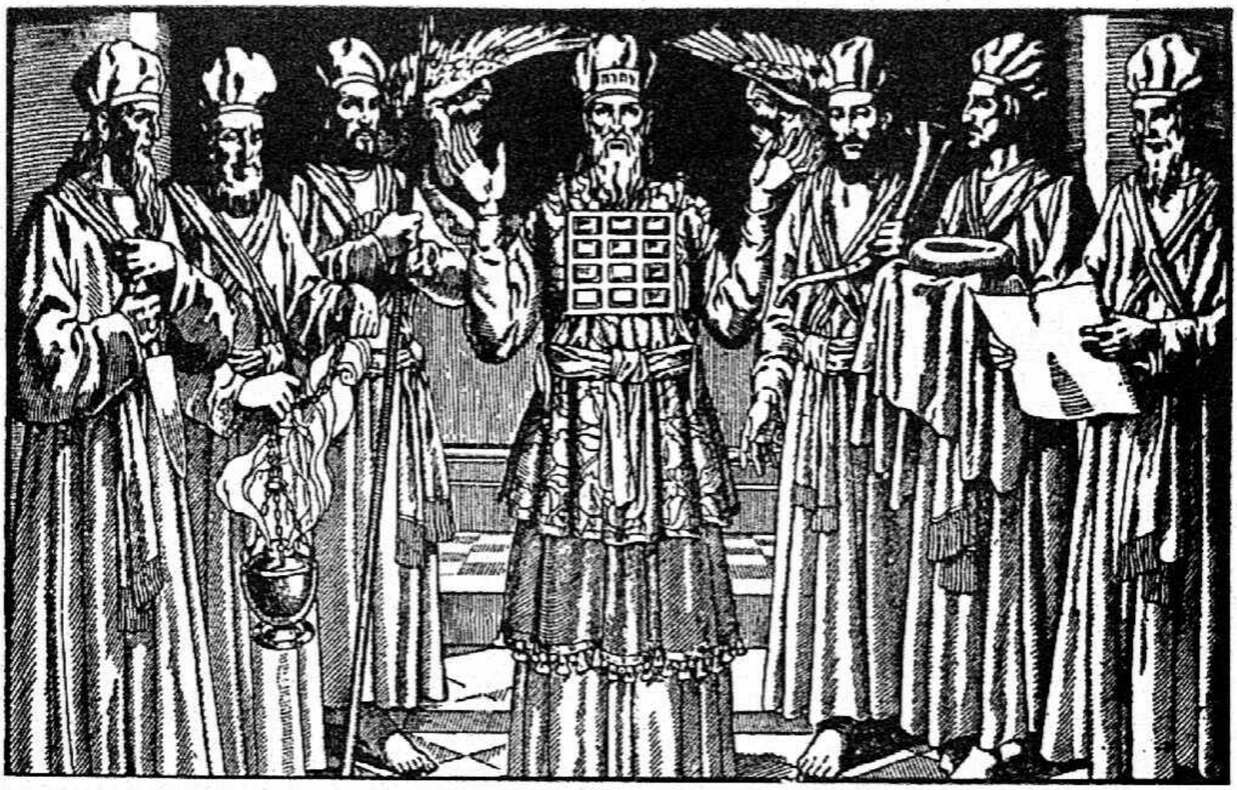
The King of Moab (4 Kings 3:27) offered his own son as a sacrifice, to obtain help against the Israelites. As St. Paul says, "What the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God" (1 Cor. 10:20).



God gave to Moses detailed instructions on sacrificial offerings (Lev. 1-7; 16; 22). Among the Jews, the high-priest, in the name of the people, offered morning and evening an unbloody sacrifice of incense, flour, oil, and frankincense. Then he offered a bloody sacrifice of a lamb, together with food and drink. On the Sabbath, two lambs, with bread and wine, were offered in addition as sacrifice.

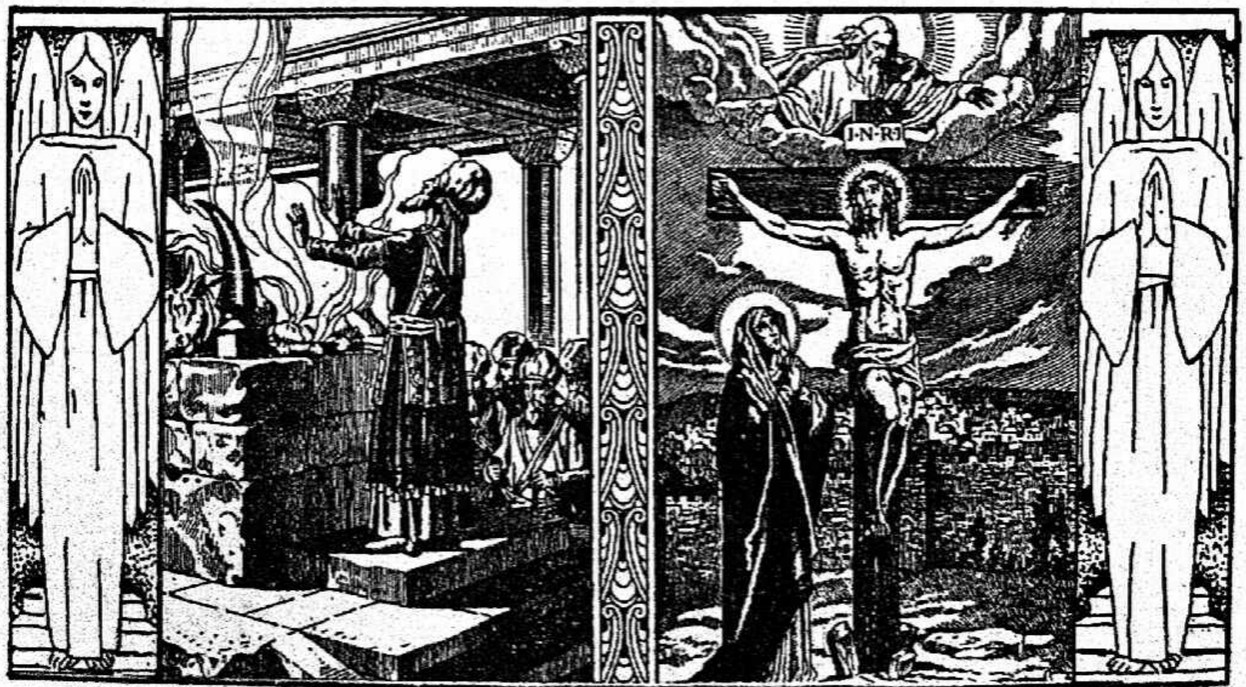
On certain solemn feasts the Jews sacrificed hundreds of victims amidst impressive ceremonies. Their chief feasts were: (a) the Pasch or Passover, *which commemorated their deliverance from Egypt; (b) the* Pentecost, *in remembrance of the Law received on Mount Sinai; (c) the* Tabernacles, *to commemorate their wanderings in the desert; and (d) the* Expiation or Atonement, *in which the priest sacrified for his own and the people's sins. These sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Christ.*

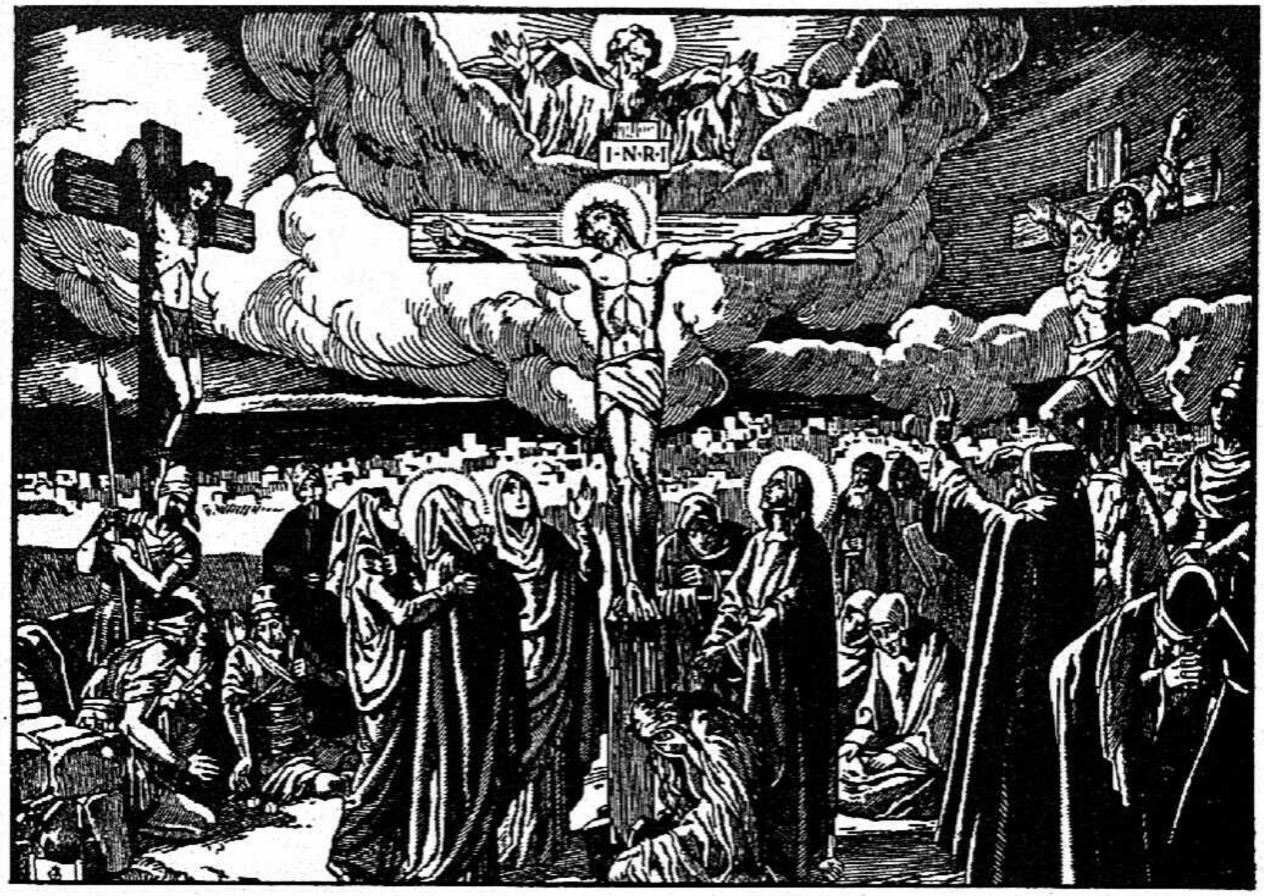




Among the Jews there were different ranks or orders of priests, as the high-priest, the priests, and the Levites: These ranks were a figure or type of the different orders that were to be in the Church founded by Jesus Christ. The people faithfully obeyed their priests, and supported them with alms.

The Jewish sacrifices were merely types of the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, and ceased with the passing of the Old Law. In the New Law we have the True Sacrifice, the same that Christ offered on Calvary by His death. The High Priest is Christ Himself, and Christ, too, is the Victim. St. Paul said, "It is impossible that sins should be taken away with blood of bulls and of goats" (Heb. 10:4).





The death of Christ on the cross was a true sacrifice. He offered Himself to His heavenly Father to expiate the sins of the world. As a Victim, He suffered first. Then He died, crying, "It is consummated!" thus completing the sacrifice. On Calvary, Christ Himself was the Highpriest, and at the same time the Victim. This sacrifice reconciled God with man.

Since the Jewish sacrifices were only a foreshadowing of Our Lord's sacrifice, they ceased when His was offered, as foretold by the prophets.

131. The New Sacrifice

What is the Mass? – The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Law in which Christ, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine.

In the early days of the Church, Mass was called the Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Supper, the Sacrifice, the Eucharist, the Holy Liturgy, the Solemnity of the Lord.

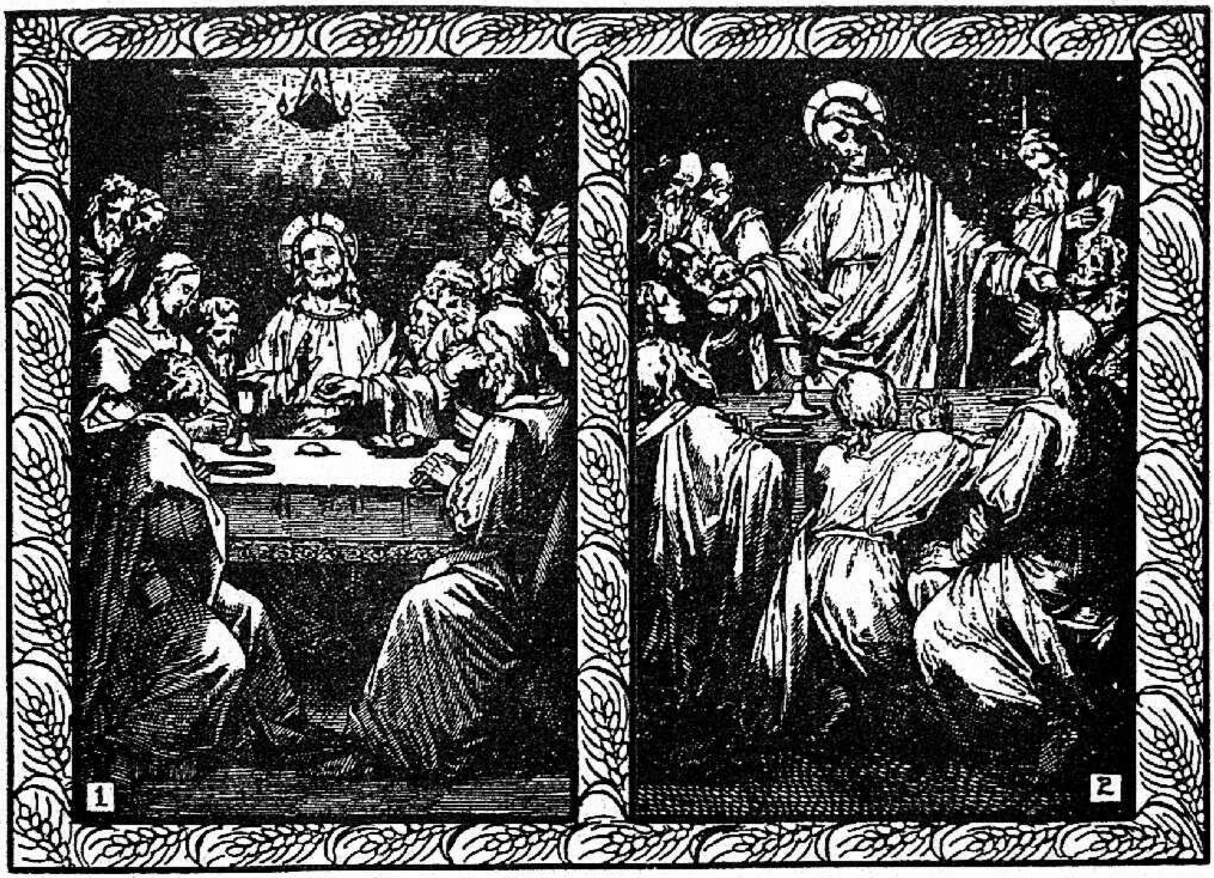
1. The *sacrifices of old* were far from perfect; sheep and goats were unworthy offerings to God in acknowledgment of His power and glory. Even in the time of the Old Law of the Jews, God had expressed His purpose to institute a new sacrifice.

In the words of His prophet Malachias, "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation" (Mal. 1:10-11). These words referred to the Sacrifice of the Mass, in which the Victim is Jesus Christ the Son of God, than Whom there can be no worthier, no cleaner, no more perfect sacrifice.

2. The Church has always taught that the *Mass is a true sacrifice.* St. Paul implies this when he says: "We have an altar from which they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle (meaning the Jews)" (Heb. 13:10).

The prophet Malachias foretold the universality of the sacrifice of the Mass. Since there are Catholic priests and churches all over the world, this prophecy is today accomplished literally; for in all places the "clean oblation", Holy Mass, is offered.

3. The sacrifice of the Mass is offered to *God alone.* However, it may be offered to God in honor of the saints and angels, especially on their feasts.



Christ instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper. After praying, He blessed bread and wine, and changed them into His Body and Blood, saying to the Apostles: "Take and eat; this is my body . . . All of you drink of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:26, 28). These words are known as the words of consecration at Mass, by which bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Who said the first Mass?—Our Divine Saviour said the first Mass, at the Last Supper, the night before He died.

1. At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ *offered* Himself up as a sacrifice to the Eternal Father, under the appearances of bread and wine.

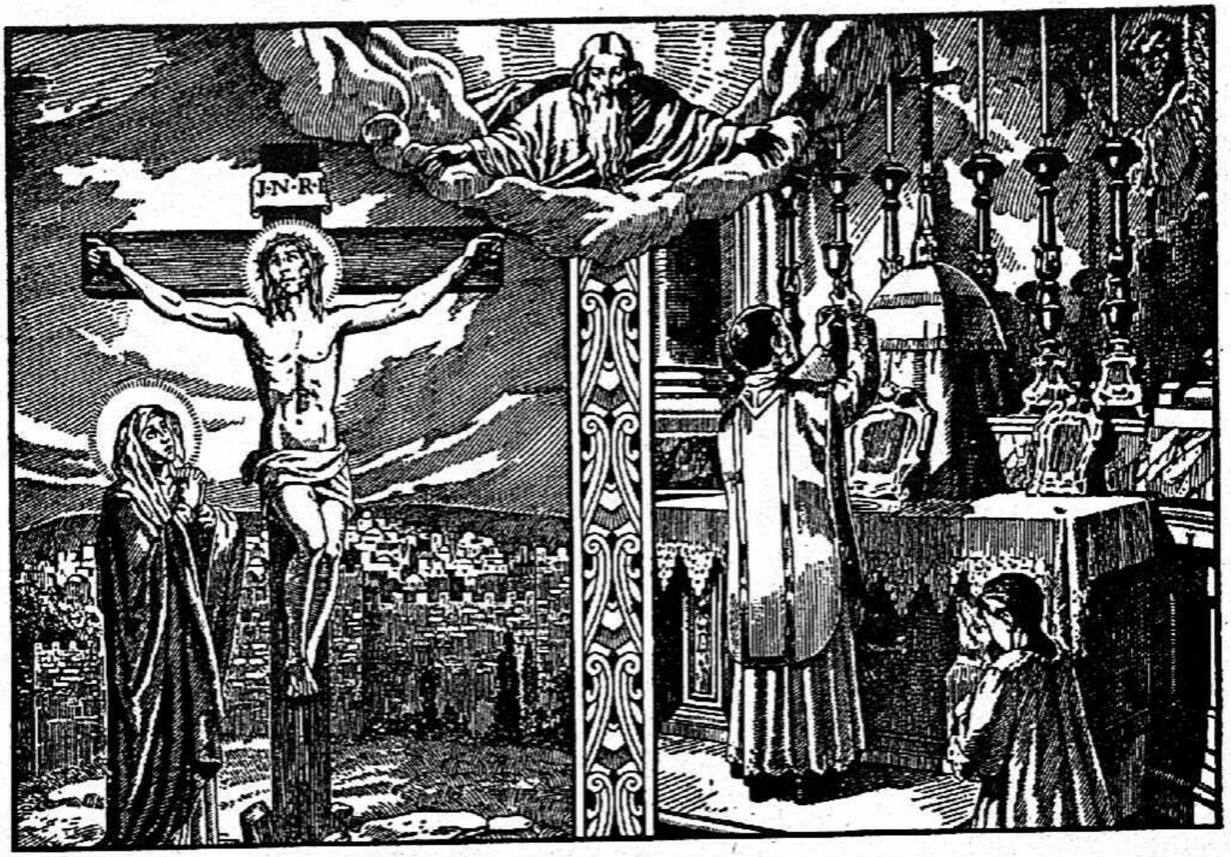
"And while they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessing it, he broke and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' And taking a cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it; and he said to them, 'This is my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many'" (Mark 14:22-25).

2. The following day, Jesus Christ *consummated* that Sacrifice by freely submitting Himself to His Passion and death by crucifixion at the hands of the Jews.

The two acts, that of the Last Supper, and that of the cross, were only two parts of the one supreme sacrifice that Our Lord offered to God the Father. After the first act, having offered Himself under the appearances of bread and wine, Christ turned to His Apostles and said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). By those words, He told them to do as He had done, offer in sacrifice to God His body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine; he commanded them in those words *to say Mass*, as the perfect sacrifice to God.

3. The Mass is *a real sacrifice,* for in it a Victim is offered up for the purpose of reconciling man with God. Our Lord caused His passion and death to enter into the institution of the Mass, thereby joining them as one.

At the Last Supper Our Lord evidently meant to *institute* a visible sacrifice. He chose for the act the very time when the old sacrifice of the Paschal lamb was celebrated. The very words used by Christ in instituting the sacrifice of the Mass, the "new covenant" or "new testament", were almost identical with those used in the institution of the sacrifice of the Old Law.



The Mass is the chief and central act of Catholic worship, the greatest act of worship that can be offered to God, an infinite ocean of graces for the living and the dead.

132. The Mass and Calvary

Why is the Mass the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross?—The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross, because in the Mass the victim is the same, and the principal Priest is the same, Jesus Christ.

1. The Mass is the very *same* sacrifice which was offered up at the Last Supper, and consummated on Calvary; it is the living *renewal* of the sacrifice on the Cross.

As Christ offered Himself up on Calvary, so as the Victim He is offered in the Mass. As on the cross His body was mangled and torn, so at the Consecration He places Himself as the Victim on the altar, with His body and blood under the separate forms of bread and wine. At the Communion, when the species of bread and wine are consumed, the sacrifice is accomplished, as it was on the cross, when at the moment of death Our Lord cried out, "It is consummated!"

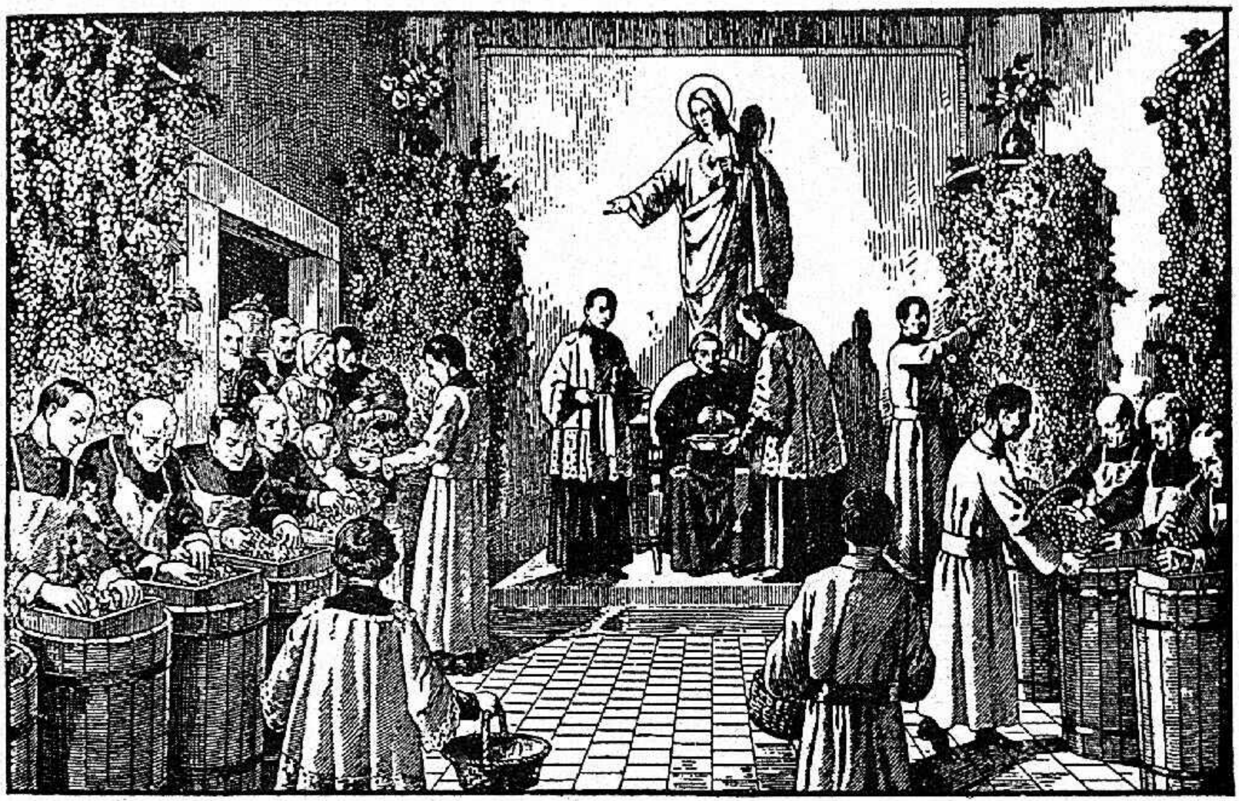
2. The Mass is no mere remembrance or memorial of Calvary; it actually *renews*, in the separate consecration of the bread and wine, the death of the Lord, the separation of His Body and Blood.

At the Last Supper, after Christ had changed the bread and wine into His Body and Blood, He said: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). And St. Paul adds: "For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim *the death of the Lord,* until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). At the Last Supper, Christ instituted a visible sacrifice, the Mass, in order to renew the bloody sacrifice which He consummated on the cross.

3. The principal priest in every Mass is Jesus Christ, who offers to His heavenly Father, through the ministry of His ordained priest, His body and blood which were sacrificed on the cross.

In both the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Mass, the same officiating High-Priest offers up the same Sacrificial Victim: ***Jesus Christ Our Lord.***

The priest saying the Mass is only Christ's minister and representative. He utters the words of consecration in the name and person of Christ, saying. "This is *My* Body. This is *My* Blood"; not, "This is Christ's Body, etc."



The illustration shows religious preparing wine for consecration from grapes. In certain places special ceremonies attended by the bishop are held when the grapes are to be pressed.

Is there any difference between the sacrifice of the cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass?—The manner in which the sacrifice is offered is different: On the cross Christ physically shed His blood and was physically slain, while in the Mass there is no physical shedding of blood nor physical death, because Christ can die no more; on the cross Christ gained merit and satisfied for us, while in the Mass He applies to us the merits and satisfaction of His death on the cross.

1. Christ was *immolated* on Calvary, once and for all; He is now in glory, and can die no more. How then can we say He is sacrificed on our altars at Mass, and not only sacrificed once, but continually? The Mass is the realization, in an *unbloody* manner, of the very sacrifice offered up on Calvary in a *bloody* manner.

On Calvary, Christ physically shed His blood; in the Mass, although the separate consecration re-enacts Christ's death, there is no physical shedding of blood.

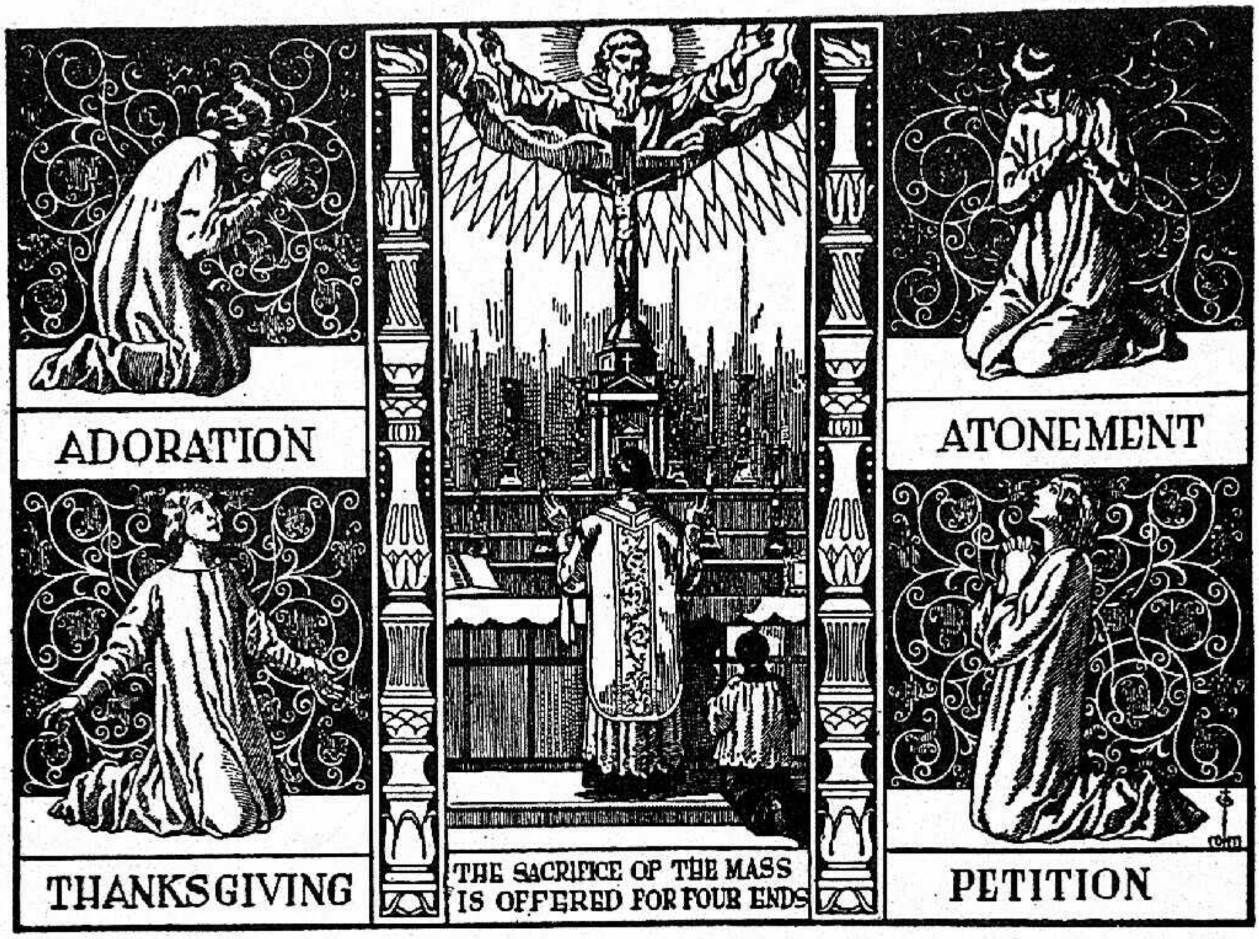
2. Christ *continues* to offer Himself as a sacrifice in the Mass, in order: to unite us with Himself, to give us a gift worthy to be offered to God, and to make us share in the merits of His sacrifice on the cross. Through the Mass the merits of the sacrifice on the cross are *applied* to our souls.

The Mass, according to the will of Christ Himself, is to apply through all time the fruits of the Redemption, made possible by the sacrifice on Calvary, which paid the full price of our redemption.

The Mass, then, is in the truest sense the *continuation* of the redeeming sacrifices of Christ. It is the Mass that gives to us the fullest efficacy of Calvary; it brings Calvary within the reach of all souls in every clime and every age. Because of the Mass, here and now we may offer up repeatedly God as our Victim to God, partake of Him for ourselves as a Gift from the Blessed Trinity, and live in constant and intimate union with Him.

3. The sacrifice on Calvary was offered up *by Christ Himself* to the Eternal Father; the sacrifice of the Mass is offered up by Him united with us, as by our Baptism we became members of His Mystical Body.

Christ gave us the Mass as a visible sacrifice to continue His sacrifice on the cross until the end of time. ***The Mass is not a mere remembrance of Calvary; it actually renews Christ's death, continues His sacrifice, and is in itself His very Sacrifice.***


ADORATION
ATONEMENT
THANKSGIVING
THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS IS OFFERED FOR FOUR ENDS
PETITION

Holy Mass may be offered to God with a fourfold intention: by way of adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and atonement. It is for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the living, and for the eternal repose of the dead. Every day of the year Holy Mass is offered, except Good Friday.

133. Ends and Fruits of the Mass

What are the purposes for which the Mass is offered?—The purposes for which the Mass is offered are:

1. To *adore* God as our Creator.

The Mass is the only worthy gift we can offer God; in it we offer to Him His own Son. Having a perfect sacrifice in the Mass, Christians need, and have, no other sacrifice to offer to God but this one.

2. To *thank* God for His many favors.

In the Mass Jesus Christ the Son of God speaks for us to His eternal Father; we have an advocate with Him. Can we fail but speak well, having this instrument of thanksgiving?

3. To *ask* God for His blessings.

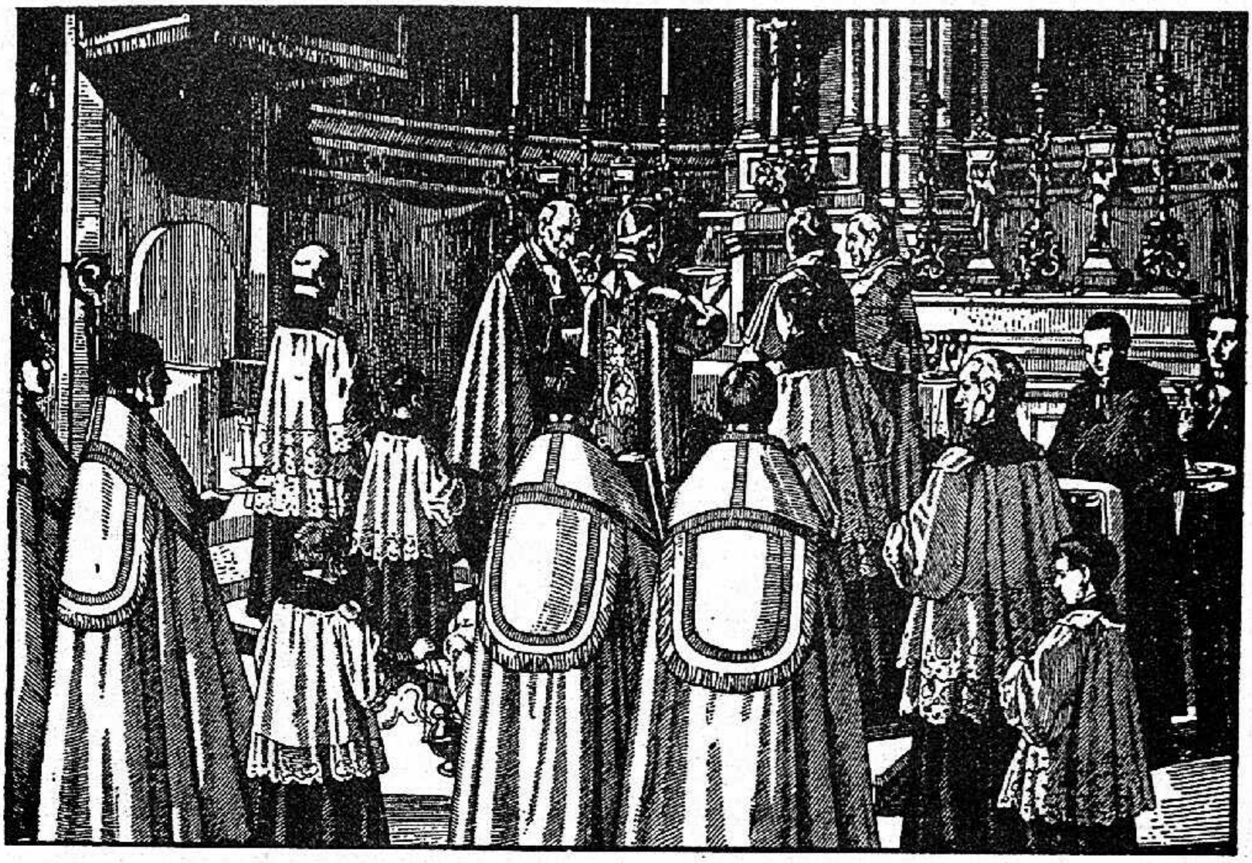
Holy Mass may be offered for the living of whatever creed. It may be offered for departed Catholics. The priest may not offer Mass publicly for departed non-Catholics, but the persons hearing the Mass may do so. Persons hearing Mass may have their own *private intentions* for offering it, aside from the intention of the priest. Mass may be offered for any intention except that which is in itself bad.

4. To *satisfy* the justice of God for the sins committed against Him.

The Mass reconciles man with God, as we learn from the words of Christ uttered at the Last Supper, "This is my blood, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:28). We are not redeemed all over again by the Mass, for we were redeemed once on the cross; but the Mass applies to our souls the fruits of redemption gained for us on the cross. As a perfect propitiatory sacrifice, the Mass satisfies the justice of God.

What fruits are derived from Holy Mass?—By means of the Mass, the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross are applied to our souls.

The sacrifice on the cross—the passion and death of Christ—is the gold mine of graces; Holy Mass is the machinery that takes the gold out for us. At Mass a torrent of graces flows from the altar of



There are different kinds of Masses: (a) low Mass, read or recited by the priest; (b) high Mass, sung by priest and choir; and (c) solemn high Mass, with deacon and subdeacon assisting the celebrant These are not really different; they differ only in the elaborateness of the ceremonies used. A pontifical Mass is a high Mass said by a bishop. A bishop puts on his vestments and takes them off before the altar, unlike the priest, who vests himself in the sacristy. Above is a pontifical Mass.

God to enrich men. God makes use of other means of grace, such as prayer; but in no other means are graces applied to us so generously.

1. At Holy Mass we particularly obtain:

(a) *Grace* to repent of mortal sin.

It is not necessary to be in the state of grace to hear Mass; the sinner does not commit a fresh sin by doing so; on the contrary he obtains the grace of conversion. Upon the cross Christ cried: "Father, forgive them;" at Mass He utters the same prayer on behalf of those present.

(b) *Forgiveness* of venial sins for those who are in the state of grace.

St. Augustine said that one "Our Father" prayed with devotion would expiate the venial sins of a whole day; how much more effective would be the Mass, which is the supreme prayer offered to God!

(c) *Remission* of the temporal penalty due to sin.

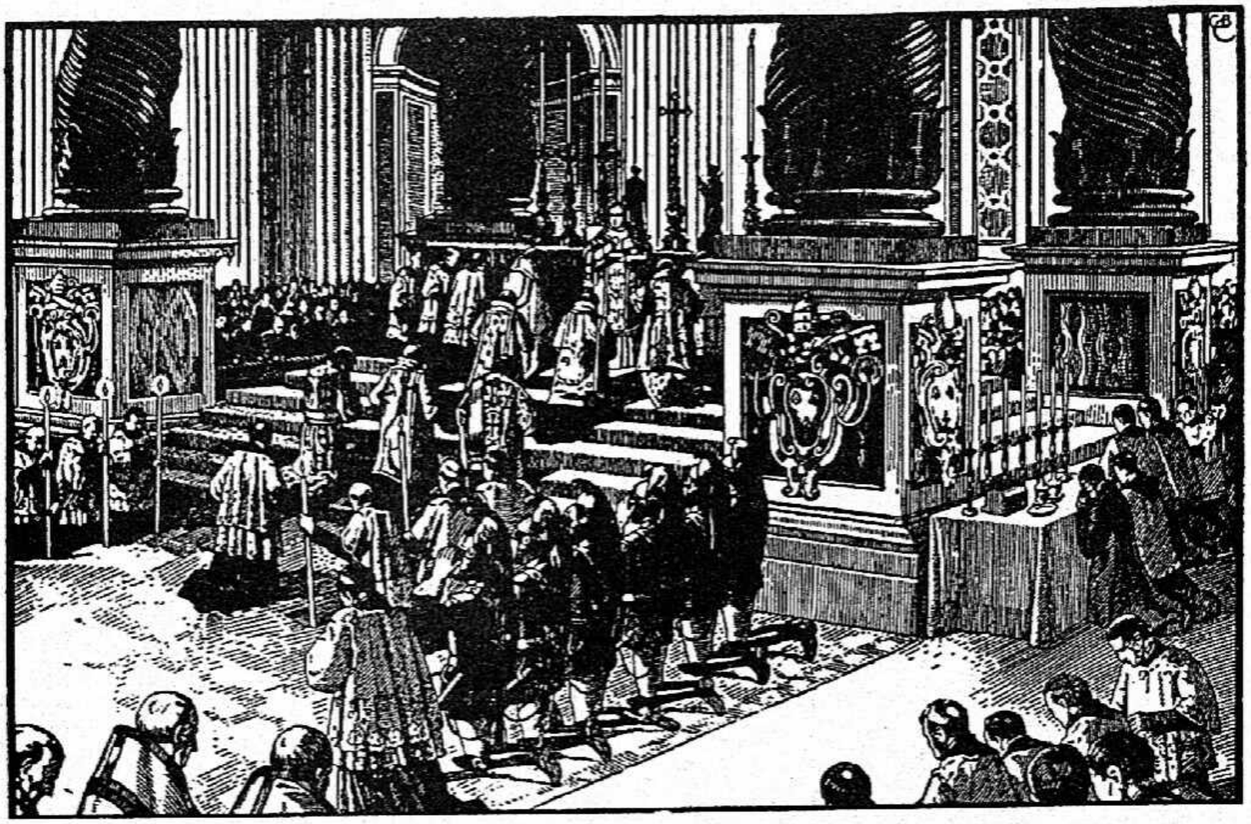
The penitent thief, who was present at the Sacrifice of the Cross, was quickly admitted into heaven, with all penalties due his sins forgiven.

2. We are sure that our prayers are heard in the Mass, because in it *Our Lord Himself prays* for us. The fruits of the Mass are granted to the person hearing it devoutly, not only in answer to his prayers, but directly, in virtue of the Sacrifice itself, through which the merits of Christ are applied to his soul.

We may obtain eternal rewards provided we are in the state of grace. We also obtain temporal blessings, such as help in our work, and protection.

3. The *whole Church* on earth and in purgatory participates in the general fruits, for the Mass is offered for all. The special fruits benefit:

(a) The priest who celebrates the Mass.
(b) The person or persons for whom it is offered.
(c) Those who assist at the Mass.
(d) Those for whom the faithful present pray and offer the Mass in union with the priest.



The most impressive of all solemn Masses is the High Mass of the Pope. The Holy Father says Mass facing the people. The Pope is the only one that can say Mass on the high altars of the four basilicas in Rome: St. Peter's, St. Paul's, St. John's (the Lateran Church), and St. Mary Major.

134. Value of the Mass; Offerings

What is the value of a Mass?—A Mass has infinite value, because it is the renewal of the sacrifice of the cross.

The value of a gift is proportionate to the dignity of the giver and the cost of the gift. The Mass, the only worthy gift for God, is offered by Christ, the Son of God: it cost Him His very life.

1. Therefore to hear or say Mass is a good work of *greater excellence* than any other.

By other good works we offer to God gifts that are human. In the Mass we offer Him gifts that are divine: His own only-begotten Son. There is no more holy and divine act that can be performed on earth than the sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The *efficacy* of the holy sacrifice does not depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of the priest; he is only the minister of Christ, Who is both Priest and Victim.

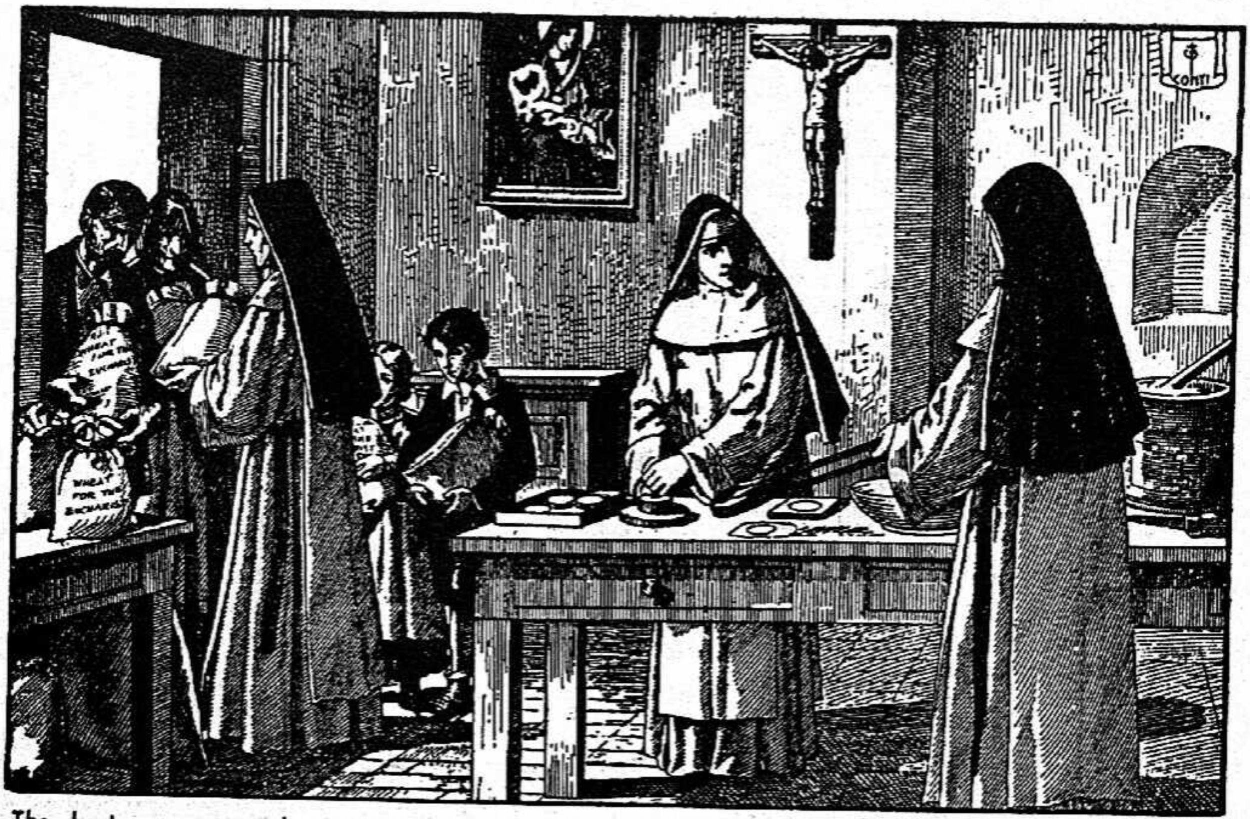
The virtue of the Mass is of itself, quite apart from the worthiness of the priest. For this reason, we do not lose the merits of Mass if it is offered for us by a priest who is not worthy, since Mass has its intrinsic value; in a similar way, a diamond is a diamond, even if the jeweler selling it be a bad man.

3. However, as a good work, the graces and favors are *limited,* partly by the will of God, and partly by the dispositions of those to whom the fruits are applied. Therefore, the more devotion we have at Mass, the greater will be the profit we derive.

Two young men went to visit Rome. Their schedule limited their stay there to one day. The first young man, upon arrival, immediately visited all the famous portions of the city, finally ending with a visit to the Holy Father and the Vatican. The second young man, being fatigued by the journey, lay down to rest. He fell asleep and awoke only when it was too dark to go anywhere. Both went to the same city, but one did not profit from his journey.

Why is an offering made to the priest who says Mass?—An offering is made to the priest who says Mass, to provide for the things necessary for the Sacrifice, and to assist in the support of the priest.

1. In the early years of the Church the faithful, wishing to participate more fully in the oblation, made *offerings* of bread and wine for the consecration.



The hosts, consecrated at Mass, taken by the priest and people, are made of pure unleavened wheat flour mixed with water and baked. They are prepared by chosen persons, usually religious.

Today it is more convenient to make a money offering. The money is most certainly *not the price* of the Mass, as the bread and wine were not.

2. Many Catholics have the laudable custom of leaving a certain amount of property or money in their wills, in order to have Masses offered for them after their death.

A *requiem Mass* is said in black vestments, and with special prayers for the dead. Masses said for the dead for thirty consecutive days are called *Gregorian Masses.*

What materials are used for consecration at Mass?—Bread and wine are used for consecration at Mass; a few drops of water are mixed with the wine.

1. The bread for consecration is made from *pure wheat flour* mixed with water and baked.

No other flour, such as rice, corn, etc., may be used, otherwise there is no consecration. Great care therefore should be taken that the flour is the proper kind.

2. The wine for consecration must be the pure juice of grapes fermented.

No other wine is valid, and if used, no transubstantiation will take place. A little water is mixed with the wine when used for consecration, because this was done by Christ. The water and wine also commemorate the water and blood that flowed from the wound on the side of Our Lord.

When is Mass offered?—Mass is offered every day of the year except Good Friday.

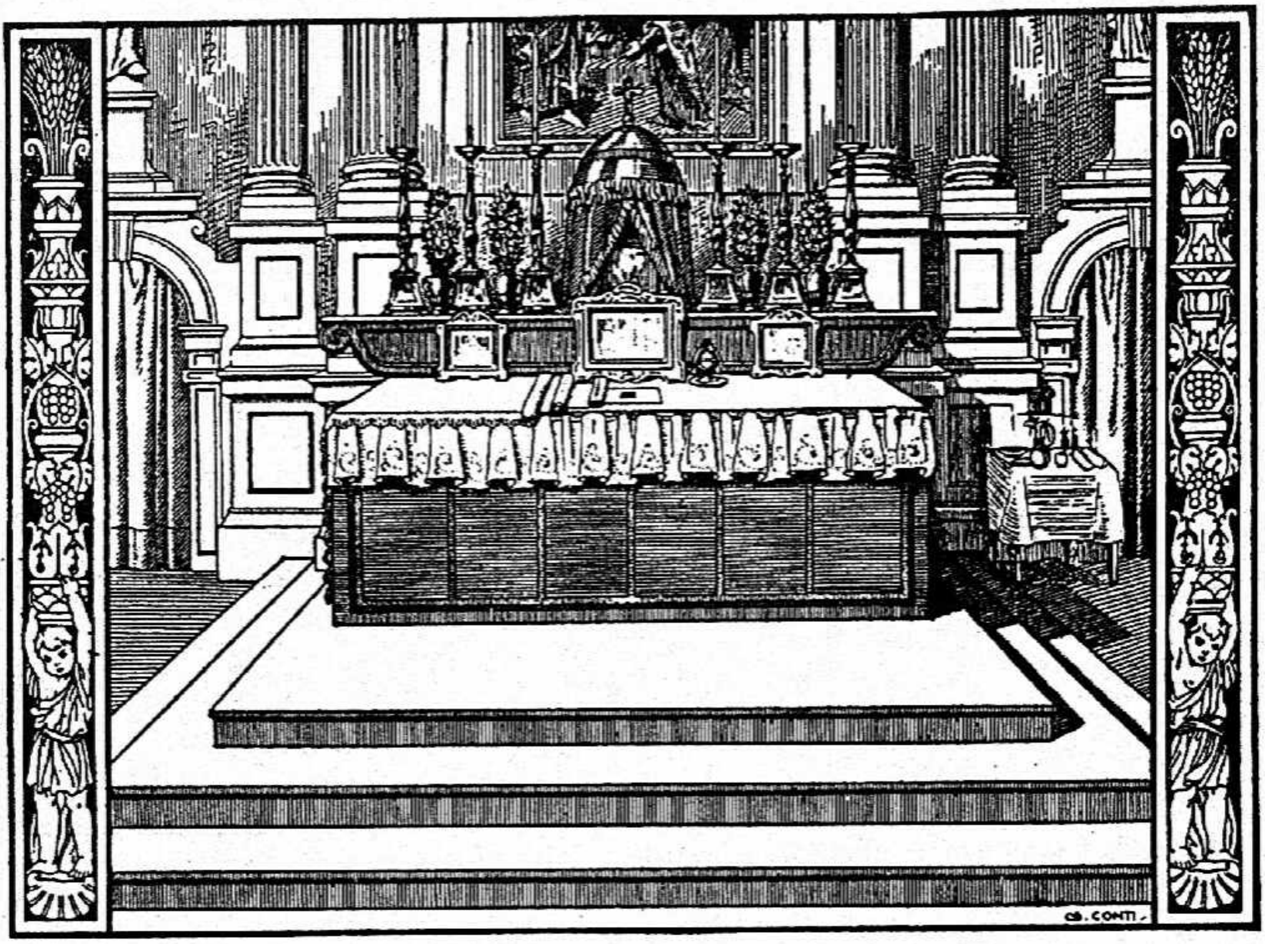
In the first centuries, bishops and priests celebrated Mass together, so that one Mass was said by several. Our present Masses, when priests are ordained, and bishops are consecrated, are similar to those early Masses.

1. Ordinarily a priest is permitted to say Mass only *once a day.* On Christmas and All Souls' Day, however, he may say three Masses.

On Sundays and holydays of obligation a priest with the proper permission may say two Masses when the needs of the people so require. In mission lands where there are few priests, they are even allowed to say three Masses.

2. Mass is said in the *morning,* and, with the approval of the bishop, also in the *afternoon.* Morning Masses are said till 1 p.m.; in the afternoon they may begin at four o'clock.

In the early days of Christianity Mass was said *in the evening,* after the example of the Last Supper, when the Mass was instituted. Later it was thought better to have it said in the morning, for a greater respect to the Holy Eucharist. In these our days, Mass is said at practically all hours of the day, in order to facilitate attendance and the receiving of Holy Communion.



The altar cards contain some of the Mass prayers for the priest's convenience. Flowers may be used on the altar except during the penitential seasons, and at Masses for the dead. Along the whole front of the altar, when ready for Mass, is hung a rich and ornamented cloth called the antipendium, with color varying according to the color used for the Mass, in vestments, etc.

135. The Altar

Where is the sacrifice of the Mass offered? —The sacrifice of the Mass is offered on a consecrated altar.

1. The Apostles offered the holy sacrifice on *a table* in a dwelling-house.

In the New Testament, there are references to meeting places of worship: churches are as old as the Church. For perhaps the first three centuries, Christians who were constantly persecuted used private homes for their meeting-places for worship. A table was used for an altar because it was on a table that Christ instituted the Mass on Holy Thursday. Another reason was that a table could be easily hidden in times of persecution; also because Mass was generally offered in private homes.

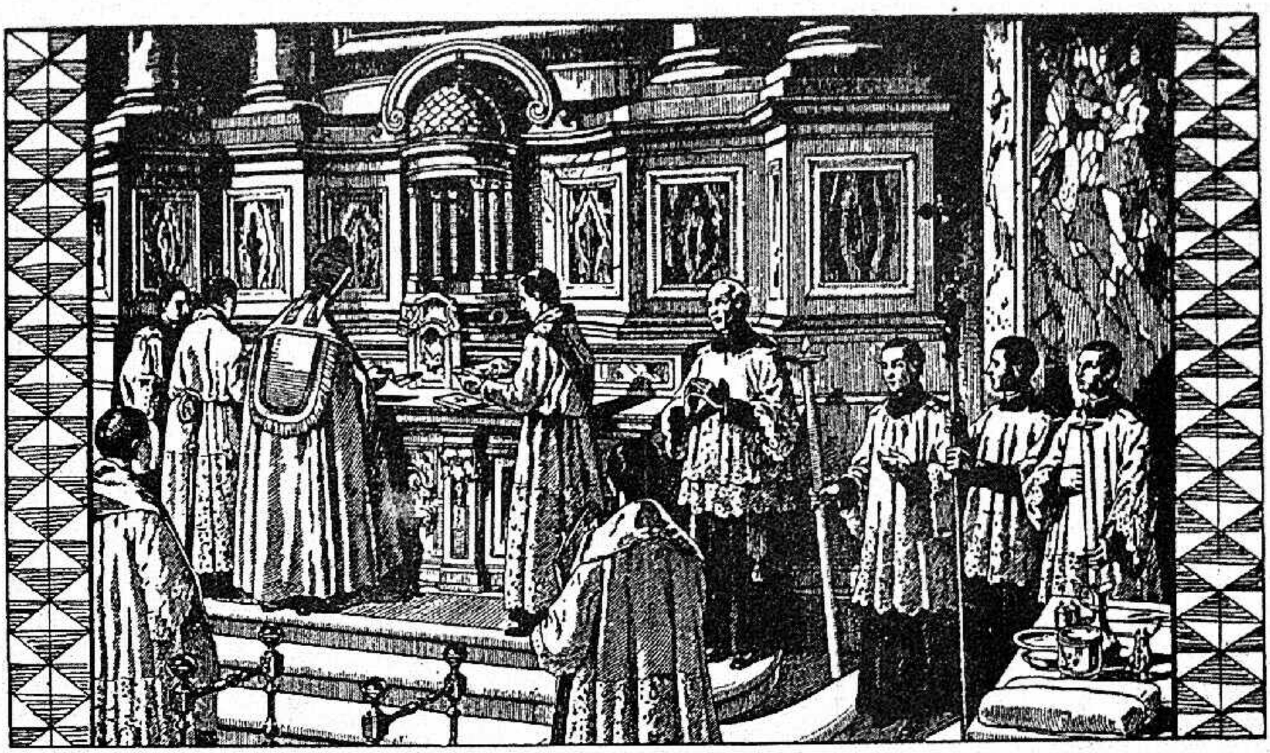
2. In Rome, during the great persecutions, Mass was celebrated on the *tombs of martyrs* in the catacombs beneath the city, where the Christians fled for safety. The catacombs were underground galleries, of which it is said Rome had about 400 miles.

This is the origin of the rule of having Mass said over the relics of saints. At the beginning of the Mass the priest kisses the place. By this, too, we profess our communion with the saints in heaven.

The lights which today we burn on the altar during Mass also had their origin during the times of persecution, when the Christians had to hear Mass in dark passages underground. They may be taken to symbolize divine grace.

3. When the persecutions were over, the Holy Sacrifice was offered in churches upon *altars of stone*. Stone altars date from the sixth century.

The altar, then as now, was often erected so that the priest and the faithful faced the east, the source of light, as God is the Source. In those days the baptistery used to be a separate building.



In the building and furnishing of the altar everything is laid down by law. The greatest exactness is observed. Above we see the bishop consecrating an altar; he is placing the holy relics into the center part in front of the tabernacle. It is on this part that at Mass the chalice and host are laid.

How is the altar made and furnished?—The altar must be made of stone, marble, or wood, and spread with three linen cloths that have been blessed by bishop or priest.

The three cloths remind us of the linen cloth in which Our Lord was wrapped for the sepulchre. They are placed on the altar also to absorb any drops of the Precious Blood that may accidentally be spilled from the chalice. The uppermost one must reach to the *predella* or platform.

1. When the altar is of wood, an oblong slab of stone is set into the top, large enough to hold the chalice and the paten: This *altar stone* is set in the center of the altar, so that Mass is always offered on stone or marble.

This stone is marked by crosses at the corners and the center; in it relics of saints are cemented. It signifies that Christ is the foundation and cornerstone on which the Church rests. The altar or altarstone is consecrated by the bishop, with special ceremonies. In cases when permission to have Mass said outside of the church is obtained, a *portable altar,* blessed by the bishop, is used. It is a square stone slab, large enough for chalice and paten.

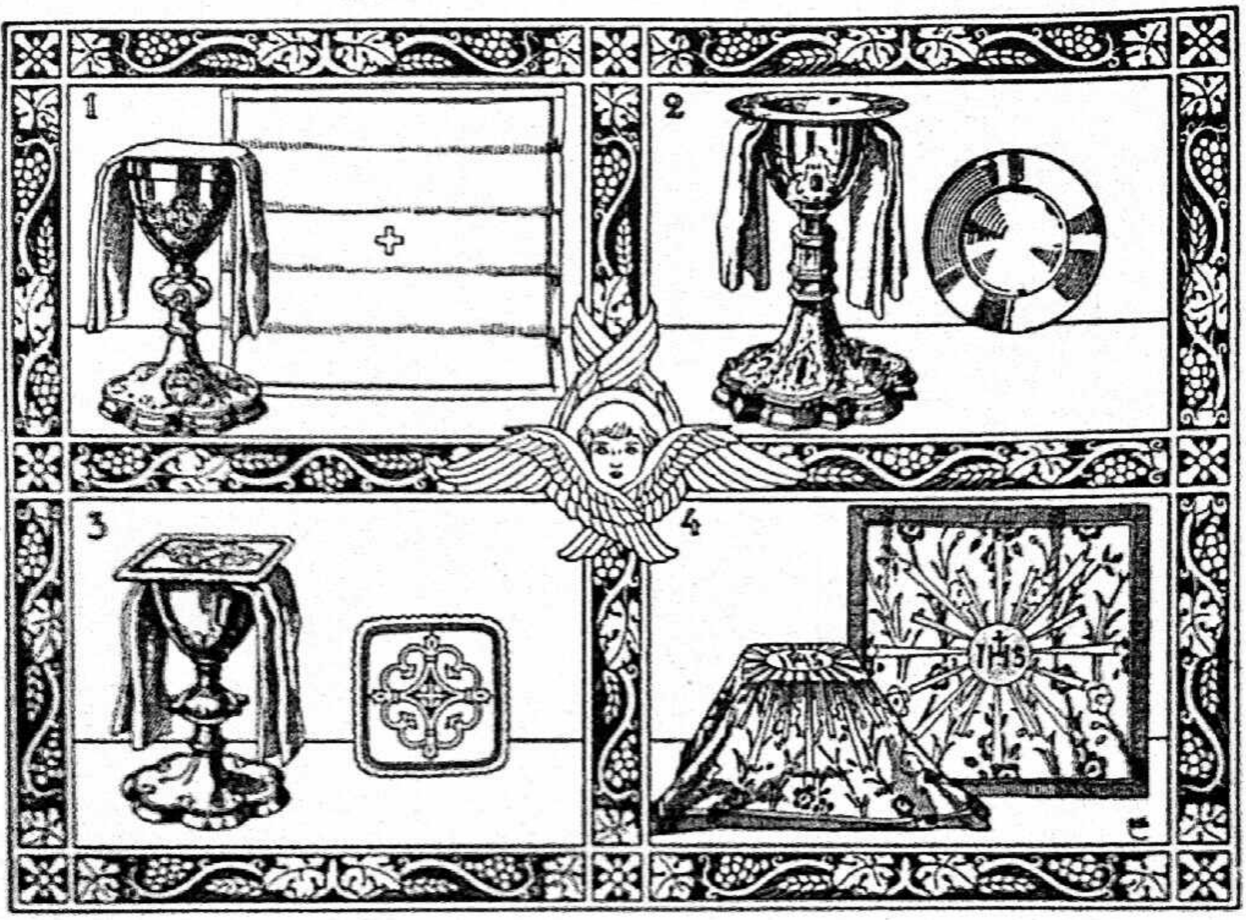
2. Every altar must have *a crucifix,* to symbolize the cross on which Our Lord died. Of the *candles* on the altar, two must be of pure wax. At a high Mass, at least six candles must be used. A *sanctuary lamp* of oil is kept burning day and night whenever the Blessed Sacrament is in the tabernacle.

The *credence* table is a table or shelf at the Epistle side of the sanctuary, holding the materials for Mass. On it are the cruets, (one with wine and another with water), the basin, and the fingertowel for the priest's hands.

3. The *tabernacle* (or "tent") is a kind of safe, made of wood, marble, or metal, having a door with lock and key, in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Early tabernacles took various forms, such as a silver dove suspended over the altar.

The tabernacle is above and behind the center of the altar, and covered with a curtain when the Blessed Sacrament is inside. It recalls the tent of the Ark of the Covenant. A veil envelops the tabernacle, and is a sign of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Its color is either white or matches the vestments.

Christians who live their Faith realize that the tabernacle is the *heart of the church,* for day and night it houses Jesus Himself, the Incarnate Son of God. If we are so eager to give the best we can to our earthly guests, how much more concerned should we be to furnish a suitable dwelling place for our Divine Redeemer, Who comes to live in our midst! The tabernacle should be as rich as we can afford to furnish, and of an artistic design.



1. *chalice and purificator*
2. *paten, with chalice*
3. *pall, with chalice*
4. *veiled chalice*

136. Sacred Vessels and Altar Linens

What are the sacred vessels used for the altar?—The chief sacred vessels used for the altar are the chalice, paten, ciborium, and monstrance or ostensorium.

Once consecrated, sacred vessels may not be touched by persons who are not in holy orders, except in cases of necessity. Those given charge of the care of the vessels should use a small linen cloth when handling them, so that they do not actually touch them. They are to be handled with reverence.

1. The *chalice* is the most sacred of all the vessels. It is the cup which holds the wine for consecration; after consecration, it contains the precious blood of Christ.

The chalice must be of gold or silver. If this is not possible, at least the inside must be always gilt. The chalice represents the chalice in which Our Lord at the Last Supper first offered His blood; it also symbolizes the chalice of the Passion; and lastly, it stands for the Heart of Jesus, from which flowed His blood for our redemption.

2. The *paten* is the small plate on which the host is laid. It is made to fit the chalice.

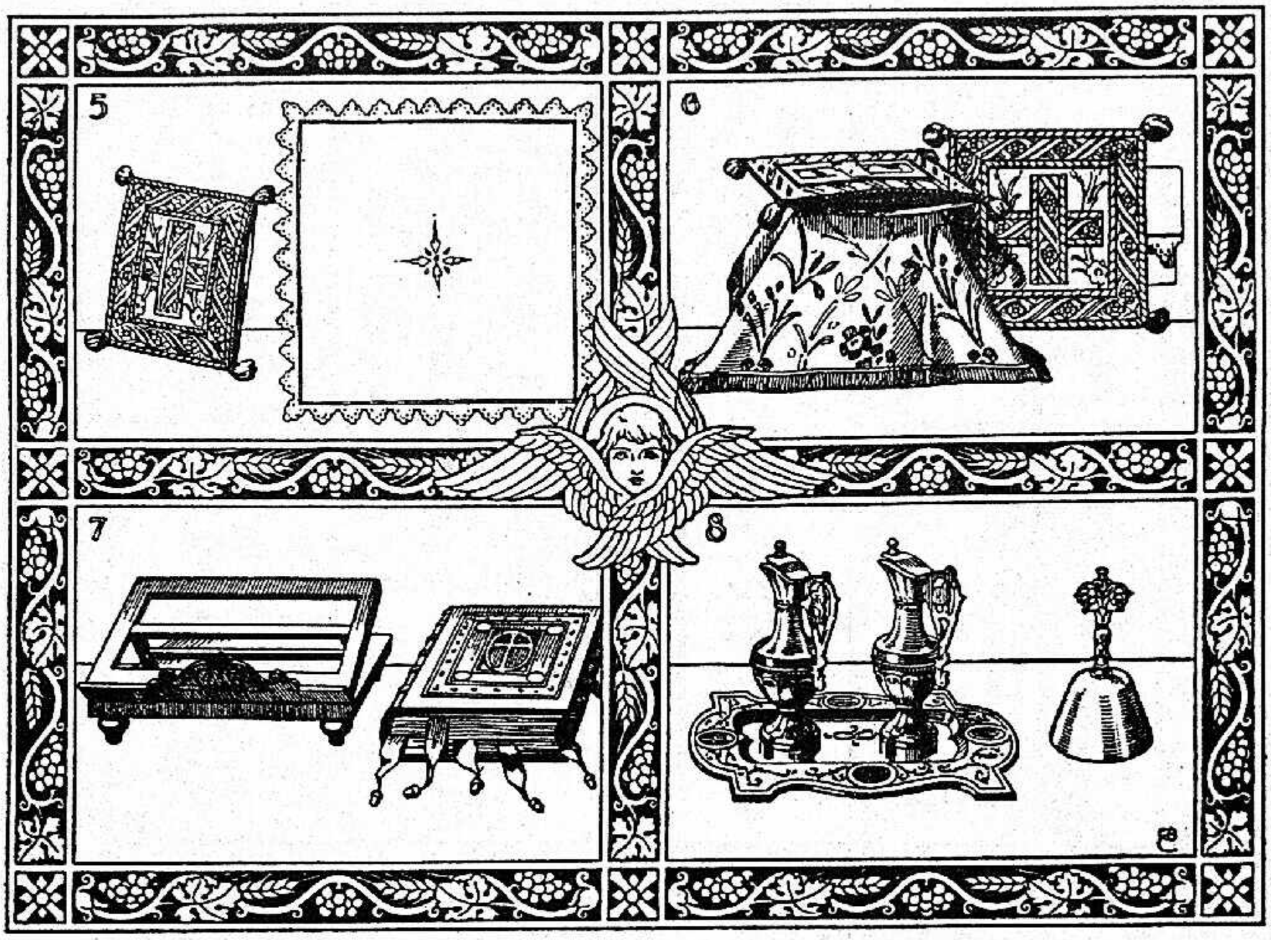
It is of the same materials as the chalice, at least gilt. Both chalice and paten must be consecrated by a bishop. In Holy Communion, our hearts become living chalices, our tongues other patens on which the priest lays Our Lord. May He ever find them welcoming Him!

3. The *ciborium* resembles the chalice, except that it has a cover. (*See page 282.*)

It is used to hold the small hosts distributed for the communion of the faithful.

4. The *monstrance* or ostensorium is the large metal container used for benediction or exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. In many churches, it is of gold, and decorated with jewels. (*See page 281.*)

The sacred Host used for Benediction is reserved in a *luna* or *lunette*, which is placed in the glassed portion of the monstrance. (*See page 282.*)



5. burse and corporal
6. veiled chalice and burse
7. missal with stand
8. cruets and bell

5. Other things, such as the Missal, veil, cruets, and incense, are used at the altar.

The *Missal* is the book which contains the prayers and ceremonies of the Mass. The *veil* is a square cloth of the same material and design as the vestments of the Priest. It is used to cover the chalice, paten, and pall before the Offertory and after the Ablution. The *cruets* are the vessels from which the acolyte or sacristan pours water and wine into the chalice held by the celebrant. *Incense* is a perfume burned on certain occasions, as at high Mass and Benediction; it is a symbol of prayer.

What linens are used for the Holy Sacrifice?—The corporal, purificator, pall, and finger towel are used.

These linens, except the finger towel, are called the "holy cloths". All are made of *white linen*. No special significance is placed on the finger towel. It is of linen, used by the priest after washing his fingers before the consecration.

1. The *corporal* is a square of fine linen, with a small cross worked in the center. Sometimes it has a border of lace. It is folded in three from both sides, and kept in a *burse*. The corporal is the most important of the holy cloths. The priest spreads it on the altar. On it he places the chalice and the Host after consecration.

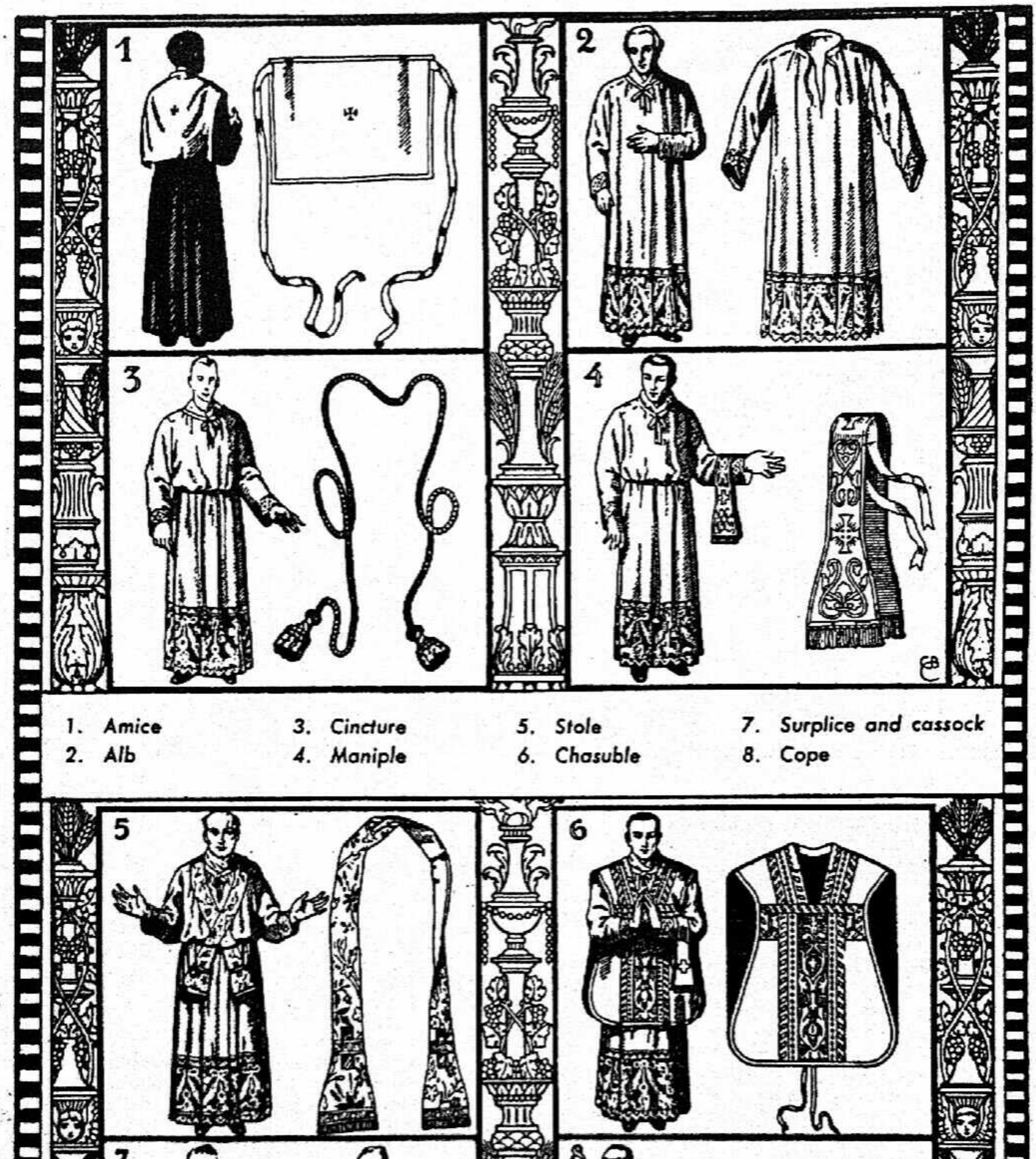
With the purificator, the corporal symbolizes the linen in which Our Lord was laid away in the sepulchre. Because of their close contact with the sacred species, neither purificator nor corporal after use may be handled by lay people without special permission. The priest first purifies them before others wash them.

2. The *purificator* is an oblong piece of linen, folded thrice, placed over the chalice.

It is used by the priest to wipe the inside of the chalice before putting in the wine and after the Ablution; he also wipes his mouth with it after the Ablution.

3. The *pall* is a small square piece of linen starched stiff, used to cover the chalice.

It represents the stone which the Roman soldiers rolled against the entrance of Christ's sepulchre.



1. Amice
2. Alb
3. Cincture
4. Maniple
5. Stole
6. Chasuble
7. Surplice and cassock
8. Cope

137. Vestments

What vestments does the priest use in the celebration of Holy Mass?—The priest uses the amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole, and chasuble, in the celebration of Mass.

When the priest appears before God at the altar, he is clad in suitable vestments. God Himself gave directions about the vestments of the priests in the Old Testament (Exod. 28:4). The chief vestments worn by Catholic priests have come down to us from the time of the Apostles.

Symbolical significances have been attached to the different vestments. The prayers said by the priest as he puts on each piece of attire show the meaning attached to them by the Church.

1. The *amice* is a piece of white linen cloth which covers the priest's shoulders.

The vesting prayer is, "Place, O Lord, on my head the helmet of salvation, that I may overcome the assaults of the devil." When putting it on, the priest places it for a moment on his head, then lets it rest on his shoulders.

2. The *alb* is a white linen tunic which envelops the priest's whole body.

As he puts it on, the priest says, "Purify me, O Lord, from all stain and cleanse my heart, that washed in the Blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy eternal delights."

3. The *cincture* or *girdle* is the cord which fastens the alb at the waist.

The vesting prayer is, "Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may remain in me."

4. The *maniple* is a short narrow strip of cloth which hangs from the left arm.

The vesting prayer is, "Let me deserve, O Lord, to bear the maniple of tears and sorrow, so that one day I may come with joy into the reward of my labors."

5. The *stole* is the long silk band that fits around the neck and is crossed on the breast of the priest. It is the symbol of authority in the Church, of all vestments most blessed.

The vesting prayer is, "Restore to me, O Lord, the state of immortality which was lost to me by my first parents, and although unworthy to approach Thy sacred mysteries, grant me nevertheless eternal joy." As a sign of his full priestly powers the bishop does not cross the stole in front. The Pope alone has the right to wear it always.

6. The *chasuble* is the uppermost vestment worn by the celebrant at Mass. It hangs from the shoulders, in front and behind, down almost to the knees.

The vesting prayer at Mass is, "O Lord, Who hast said, 'My yoke is sweet and my burden light,' grant that I may carry it so as to obtain Thy grace." The chasuble, stole, maniple, and veil for the chalice are made as a set of vestments, of the same material, color, and design.

7. The *biretta* is the three-ridged square cap worn by the priest when he enters the sanctuary. (*See page* 282.)

What vestments are used by the priest outside of Mass? — Outside of Mass, the priest uses the cassock or soutane, the cope, the surplice, and the humeral veil.

1. The *cassock* or *soutane* is the principal vestment used by ecclesiastics.

It is a robe reaching down to the feet, and buttoned in front. For priests it is black, for bishops violet, for cardinals red, and for the Pope white. In some Catholic countries ecclesiastics go everywhere in their cassocks.

2. The *surplice* is a short alb, used by the priest outside of Mass, when he preaches, joins a procession, etc.

At High Mass, the deacon wears a special vestment called *dalmatic*, and the subdeacon a *tunicle*.

3. The *cope* is a mantle used for benediction, processions, and other occasions outside of Mass.

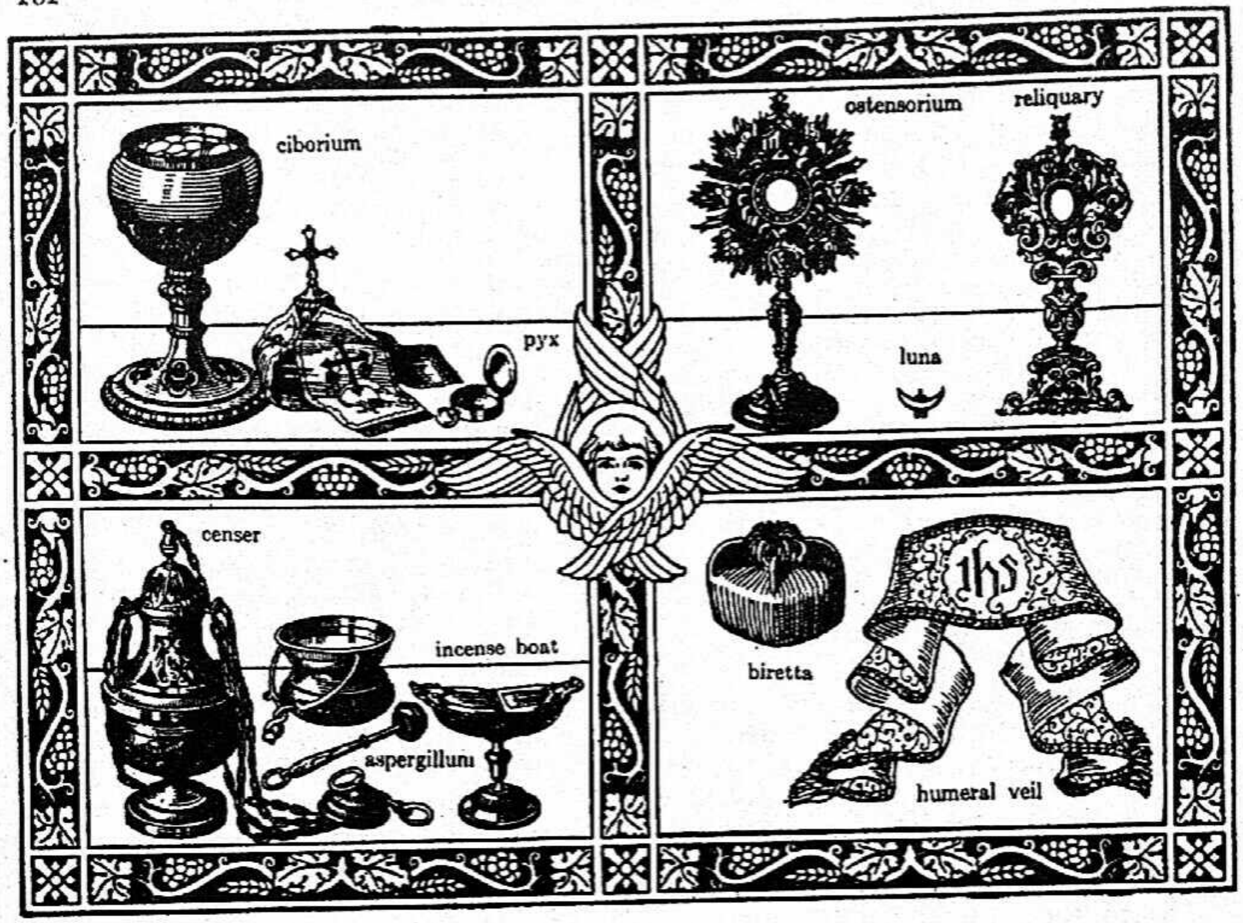
When a priest dies, he is buried dressed in his cassock and surplice, and with the purple stole, the badge of his priesthood. In complete purple vestments, he lies in dignity.

4. The humeral *veil* is the long silk cloth used by the priest when carrying the Blessed Sacrament and giving benediction.

Some of the vestments, such as the amice, alb, surplice, and benediction veil, are always white. The stole for hearing confessions is always purple.

Why do Catholics spend a great deal of care and money on sacred vessels, vestments, and furnishings for the altar?—Catholics spend a great deal of care and money on sacred vessels, vestments, and furnishings for the altar, because it is only right to give what is most precious and beautiful for the service of God.

Nothing is too good for the Lord of heaven and earth. The beauty of God's house also impresses the beholder and helps devotion. Some worldly-minded people are prone to ask, *"To what purpose is this waste?"* when they see how much care and money Catholics spend on sacred vessels, vestments, and church ornaments. Let us remember that Judas asked that when Magdalene anointed Our Lord.



138. Liturgical Colors

What colors are used at Mass?—At Mass various colors are used, according to the season and event being commemorated, these colors being: white, red, green, purple, and black.

In the early days of the Church, the vestments were of one color, white, though black was also used for mourning. In our times, not only the priest's vestments, but the tabernacle curtain, veil, and antependium are in the prescribed color.

1. *White* vestments are worn on the festivals of Our Lord, except those of His Passion; they are also used for the feasts of Our Lady, and of Virgins and Confessors.

White symbolizes purity and joy; hence its use for Our Lord and virgins.

2. *Red* vestments are used at Pentecost, in commemoration of the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire; red is likewise used on the feasts of martyrs and Apostles, and on the feasts of the Holy Cross.

Red is the color of fire and blood; hence its use for Pentecost and for martyrs is very appropriate.

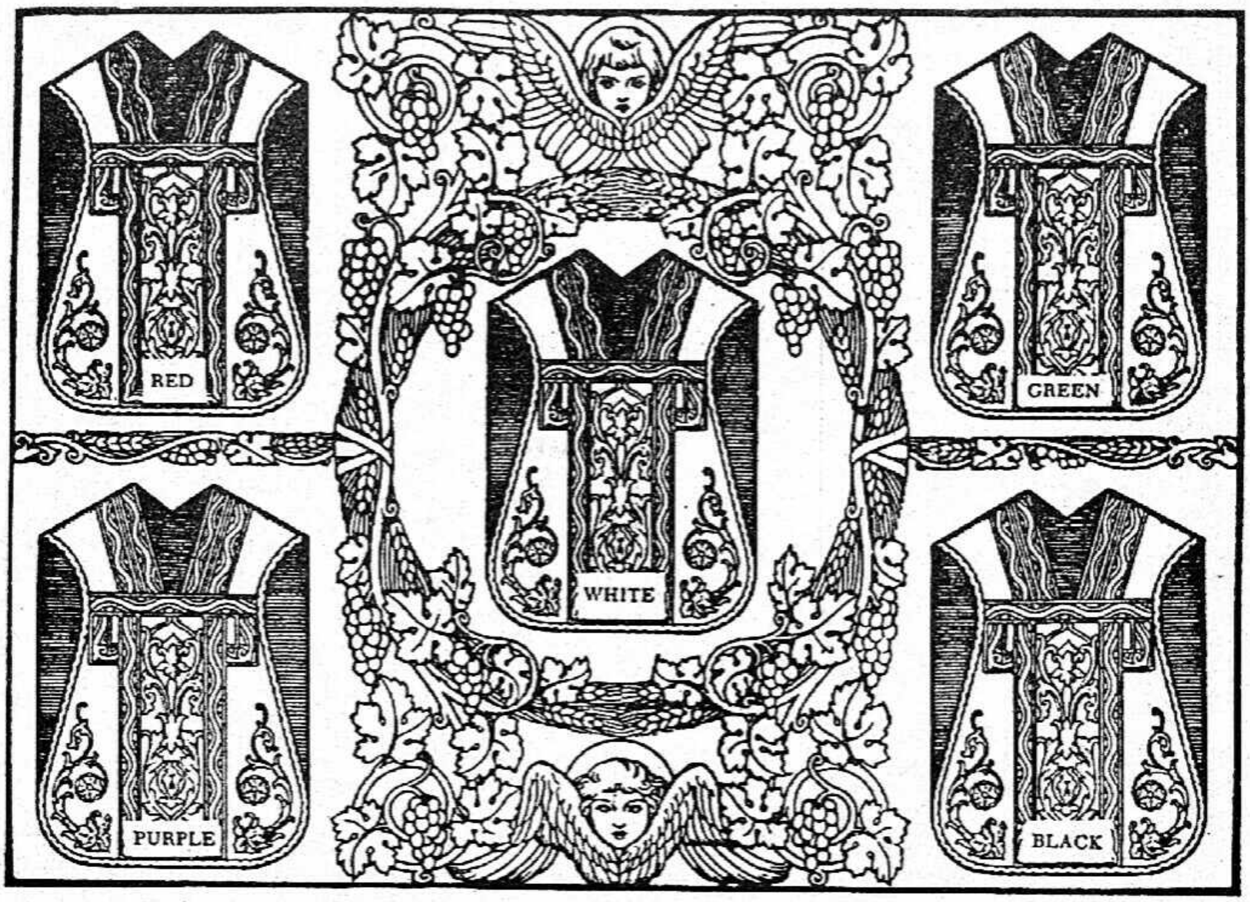
3. *Green* vestments are prescribed on Sundays after the Epiphany and after Pentecost, that is, outside Lent and Advent, except when some special festival requires another color. *Gold* may be substituted on solemn feasts for white, red, and green.

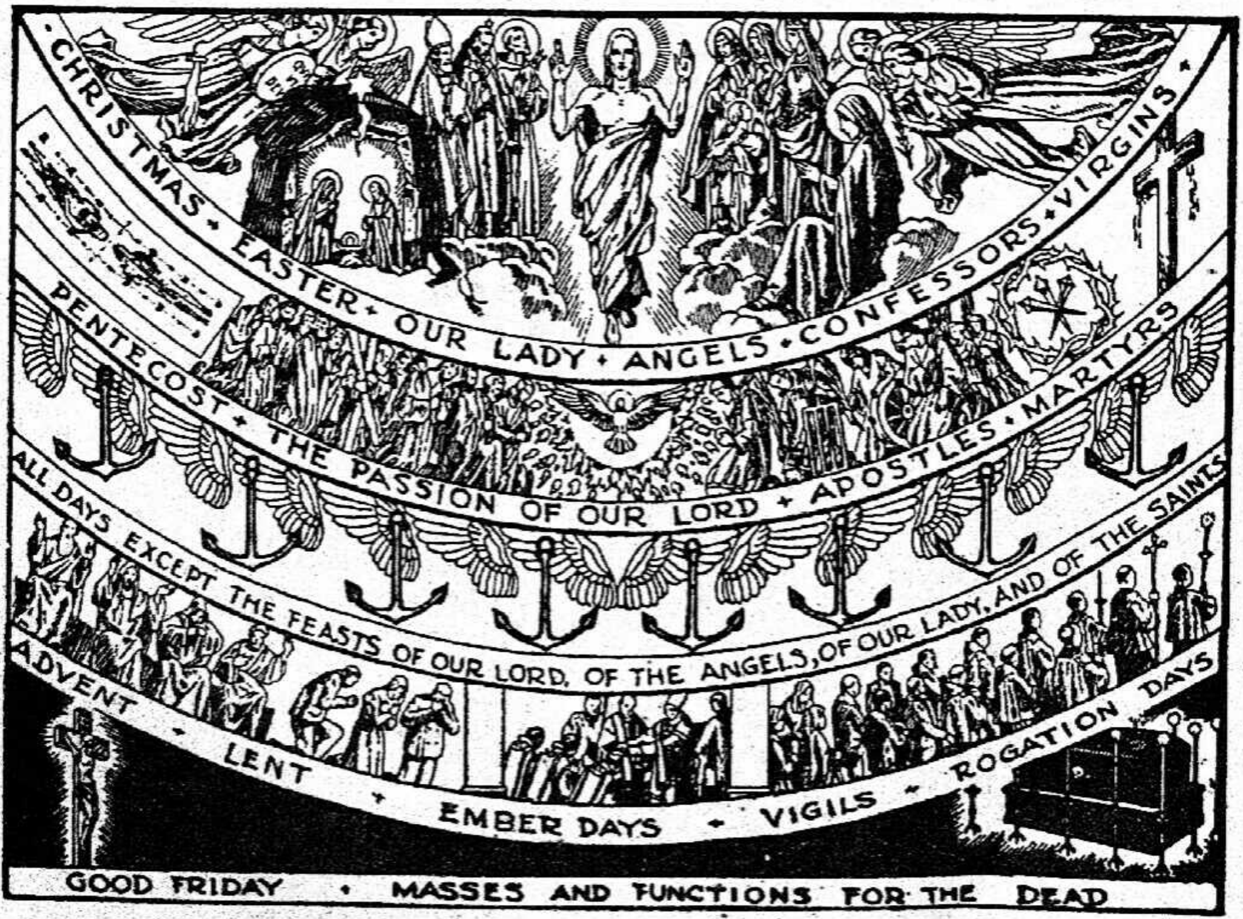
Green is the symbol of hope and growth; hence its use for the greater part of the year.

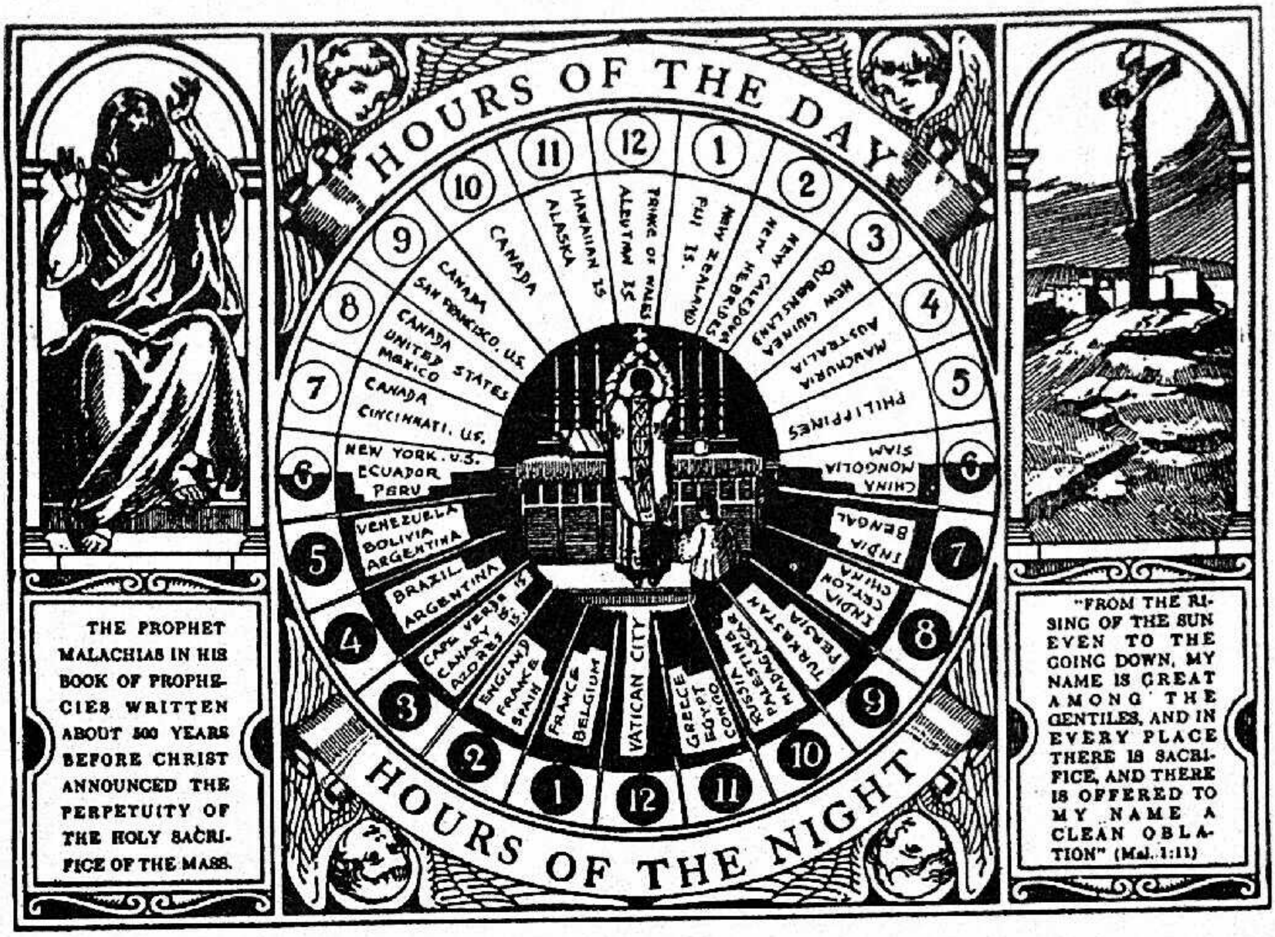
4. *Purple*, or *violet* vestments are worn during Advent and Lent, as well as for Vigils, Rogation Days, and Ember days.

Vigils are the days preceding great festivals. As purple is a penitential color, it is fitting to use it during the seasons of special penance, Advent and Lent. It is also used on December 28, Feast of the Holy Innocents, to show the sympathy of the Church towards the mothers of the first martyrs.

5. *Black* vestments are used at ceremonies for the dead, and on Good Friday. However, at the funerals of children who die before the age of reason, white vestments are used, to express the joy we should feel at the knowledge that an innocent one is Home.


RED
GREEN
WHITE
PURPLE
BLACK


CHRISTMAS • EASTER + OUR LADY + ANGELS • CONFESSORS • VIRGINS
PENTECOST + THE PASSION OF OUR LORD + APOSTLES • MARTYRS
ALL DAYS EXCEPT THE FEASTS OF OUR LORD, OF THE ANGELS, OF OUR LADY, AND OF THE SAINTS
ADVENT • LENT + EMBER DAYS • VIGILS • ROGATION DAYS
GOOD FRIDAY • MASSES AND FUNCTIONS FOR THE DEAD


HOURS OF THE DAY
12
TRINK OF WALES ALEUTIAN IS
1
FIJI IS. NEW ZEALAND
2
NEW HEBRIDES NEW CALEDONIA
3
NEW GUINEA QUEENSLAND
4
AUSTRALIA MANCHURIA
5
PHILLIPPINES
6
SIAM MONGOLIA CHINA
7
INDIA BENGAL
8
INDIA CEYLON CHINA
9
PERSIA TURKESTAN
MADAGASCAR PALESTINE RUSSIA
10
GREECE EGYPT CONGO
11
VATICAN CITY
12
FRANCE BELGIUM
1
ENGLAND FRANCE SPAIN
2
CAPE VERDE IS. CANARY IS. AZORES
3
BRAZIL ARGENTINA
4
VENEZUELA BOLIVIA ARGENTINA
5
NEW YORK. U.S. ECUADOR PERU
6
CANADA CINCINNATI. U.S.
7
CANADA UNITED STATES MEXICO
8
CANADA SAN FRANCISCO. U.S.
9
CANADA
10
HAWAIIAN IS ALASKA
11
HOURS OF THE NIGHT

THE PROPHET MALACHIAS IN HIS BOOK OF PROPHECIES WRITTEN ABOUT 500 YEARS BEFORE CHRIST ANNOUNCED THE PERPETUITY OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

"FROM THE RISING OF THE SUN EVEN TO THE GOING DOWN, MY NAME IS GREAT AMONG THE GENTILES, AND IN EVERY PLACE THERE IS SACRIFICE, AND THERE IS OFFERED TO MY NAME A CLEAN OBLATION" (Mal. 1:11)

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered every hour somewhere in the world. Wherever he is, a Catholic knows that whatever he may be doing, he can join spiritually in the Holy Sacrifice. The chart above gives the approximate time in the United States when Masses are most likely being said (6 a.m.) in the countries listed on the dial. Let us join in a Holy Mass somewhere now.

139. Manner of Assisting at Mass

How should we assist at Mass? — We should assist at Mass with reverence, attention, and devotion.

1. We should remember that we are *present* at the Holy Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood. Whispering, laughing, and looking about during Mass are out of place and *irreverent.*

When we are conversing with anyone, we give him all our attention, and do not even think of other people. At Mass we are in the Real Presence of God. We should fix our attention on Him, and forget everything else. It is the practice to kneel during Mass, at least from the beginning to the Offertory, and from the Sanctus till after the Communion, standing for the Gospels.

2. One should not come to Mass *overdressed.* It is a distraction for others to see people entering in the height of fashion.

Some women seem to go to church only to attract attention by their clothes, their new hairdressing, their paint. The church is not a fashion parade.

3. It need not be said that one does not hear Mass outside the church, but *inside.* Too often men stand outside and talk together while Mass is going on, and go in only if they feel like doing so. These people do not hear Mass. However, if one goes to hear Mass and finds the church packed, he really hears Mass so long as he prays and unites himself with the Sacrifice, even though he could not see from behind a post.

It is related of St. John the Almoner, Patriarch of Alexandria in the 7th century, that he observed some of his parishioners on Sundays and holydays had formed the habit of standing about the churchyard and talking together instead of entering the church to hear Mass. The good Bishop determined to put an end to this bad habit.

One Sunday, instead of saying Mass in the church, he went outside and stood with the idlers. They looked at him in surprise. He said, "You wonder what I am doing here. But remember where the flock is, there the pastor must be. If you enter the church, I shall also go in." Shamed into their right senses, the idlers went in at once and from that time never again "heard Mass" outside.

4. We should try to give the Holy Sacrifice all our *attention and devotion*. We should keep away from our minds all distractions as far as possible, and unite ourselves with Jesus in His Sacrifice, especially in the principal parts of the Mass.

In ancient days the Jews offered thousands of victims at sacrifice in the Temple, all in silence. The early Christians remained motionless at Mass, kneeling in reverence throughout the Holy Sacrifice.

What is the best method of assisting at Mass? — The best method of assisting at Mass is to unite with the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice, and to receive Holy Communion.

1. The best way of uniting ourselves in offering the Holy Sacrifice is by *following the prayers* of the Mass from a Missal, and meditating on the mysteries presented therein. If we have no Missal, we should devoutly meditate, especially at the principal parts, on Our Lord's Passion; the Mass is a reenactment of the sacrifice on the cross, a commemoration of Christ's death.

Those who say vocal prayers must be careful not to whisper so loud as to disturb others. At the principal parts of Mass, we should always suspend our private devotions and meditate on the particular mystery presented: at the Offertory uniting our intentions with the priest, at the Consecration welcoming Jesus, and at the Communion inviting Him into our hearts and thanking Him for the consummation of His sacrifice.

2. We should also *unite ourselves* with the rest of those who hear the Mass, and with all Christians throughout the world, for whom Christ died as well as for us. In the early days of the Church, Christians heard Mass in congregation, answering to the priest parts said now by the server.

A similar practice is now used, in the *Missa recitata*, wherein the congregation speak out loud the responses at Mass. When younger people hear Mass, it is well to have a little singing, too. Sacred songs are in themselves prayer. Our Lord and His Apostles sang a hymn at the Last Supper.

3. It is a great honor and privilege to be allowed to *serve Mass*. This privilege is reserved to boys and men. Girls and women may answer the Mass prayers, like acolytes, but they are not permitted to enter the sanctuary. Every boy should avail himself of the opportunity when it offers itself. He mingles with the angels in the sanctuary; he obtains special graces for his service. Parents should see to it that their boys join the Altar Boy Society of the parish

As early as possible, when a boy is 7 or 8 years old, he should be accustomed to serve Mass. He should learn the Mass prayers well, pronounce them distinctly, and understand their meaning when he is sufficiently advanced. He should be recollected in manner, remembering where he is and in what holy ceremony he is taking part.

4. If everybody cannot serve Mass, at least everybody, man, woman, or child, can *unite himself* with the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice; and everybody who has reached the age of reason and has been properly prepared can receive Communion.

Why is Mass said in Latin?—Mass is said in Latin because Latin is the official language of the Western Church.

1. The use of Latin, a dead language, has many *advantages*. It insures unity and uniformity in faith and practice.

There can be no change from one church to another using the same Latin rite. Because Latin is a dead language, the words do not change their meaning and the interpretation is always uniform.

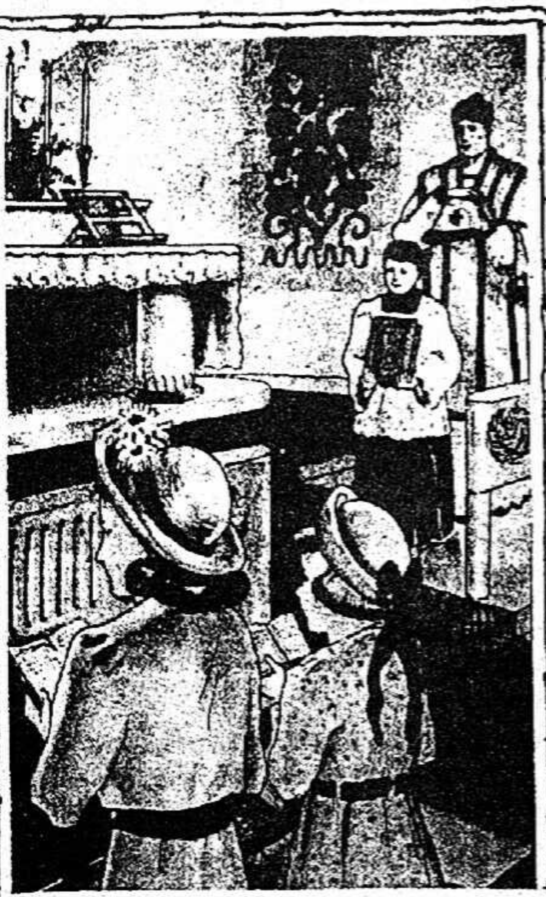
2. In the Eastern Churches, Mass is said in *several other ancient languages*.

However, all the languages in which Mass is said have gone out of daily use and cannot be understood without previous instruction.

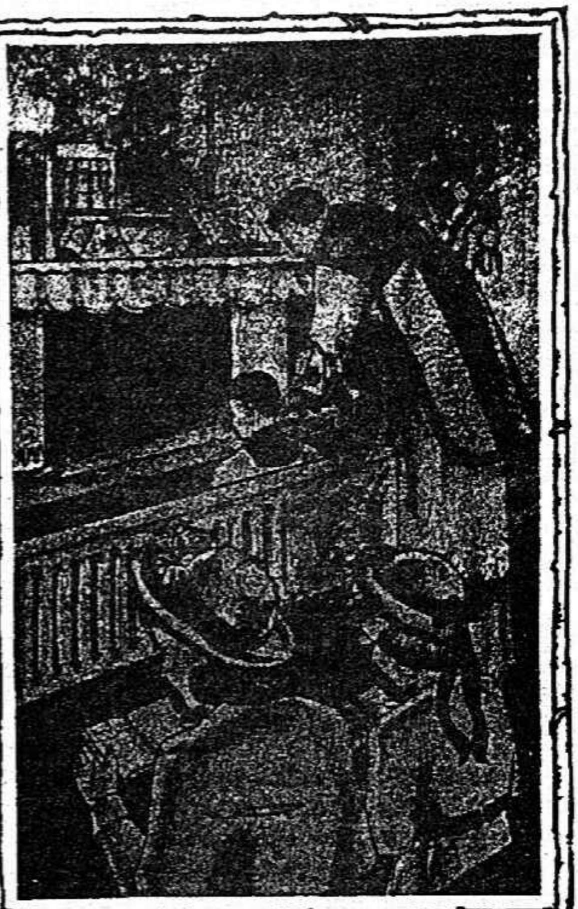
3. It is not *necessary to understand* the Mass prayers as pronounced by the priest, as they are generally pronounced in a very low tone of voice. The prayers are not supposed to be addressed to people, but to God. Mass is not instruction, but sacrifice.

The people, by means of their prayer books, can follow the movements of the priest, and hear the Mass. Missals for the laity have all the prayers read by the priest, translated from the Latin.

4. If preferred, *a prayer-book* may be used at Mass, reading the prayers for Mass, or even other prayers. The five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary are suitable as Mass devotions, setting forth as they do Our Lord's Passion.



Beginning of Mass



Confiteor

140. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Beginning of Mass

As the priest enters the sanctuary, the people *stand,* out of respect for the representative of Christ. They then *kneel* for the beginning of Mass.

The priest places the covered chalice on the center of the altar, having first spread the corporal. He opens the Missal. He then goes to the foot of the altar, and ***begins Mass*** by making the sign of the cross.

The people should make the sign of the cross with the priest. They should direct their intention for hearing Mass. Those who come after this point are *late for Mass.*

The priest says an introductory psalm, to express his trust in God, and his awareness of his own unworthiness. The prayers said at the foot of the altar symbolize the thousands of years during which man was far from God, and longing for the Redeemer.

In Masses for the dead, and from Passion Sunday to Holy Saturday exclusively, the psalm is omitted.

The Confiteor

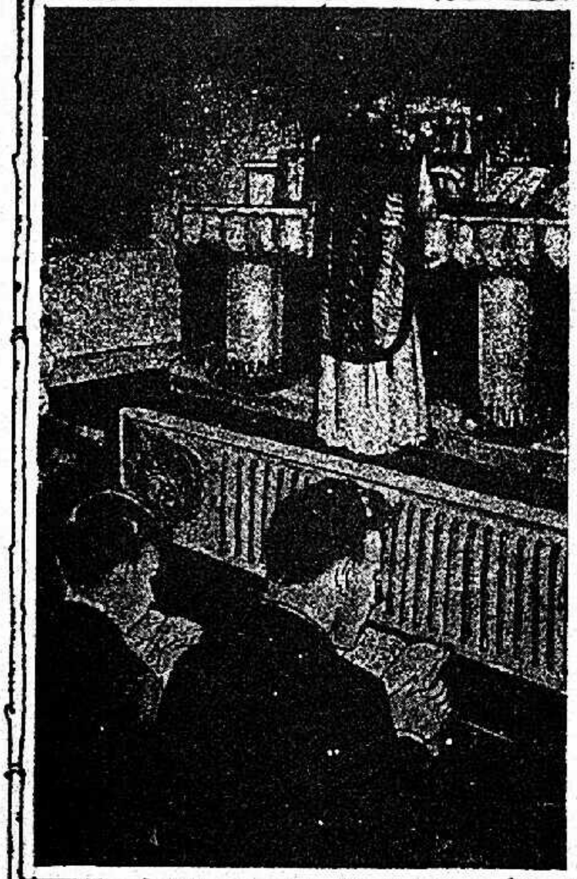
After the psalm, the priest bows and says the ***Confiteor,*** a confession of sin, as a preparation, an expression of humility before God. The Confiteor is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

The priest then goes up the altar and kisses it in the place beneath which relics of some Saints are cemented in the altar stone. He goes to the right or epistle side, and reads the opening prayer. In solemn Masses, the altar is incensed.

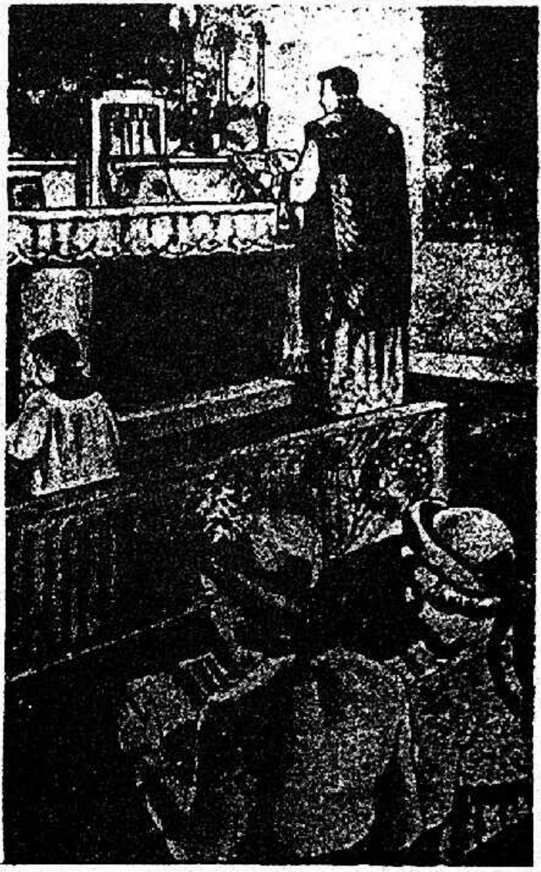
The Introit

Originally the ***Introit*** was a psalm chanted by the priest and his assistants when they entered the sanctuary. Today it is reduced to a verse, the first to be read at Mass.

The Introit varies each day, as do certain other parts of the Mass, like the Collects, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Secrets, Communion, and Postcommunions.



Gloria



Epistle

The Kyrie

The priest goes to the center and recites the ***Kyrie eleison*** alternately with the server, imploring God's mercy. The prayer is repeated nine times: three in honor of God the Father, three in honor of God the Son, and three in honor of God the Holy Ghost.

The Gloria

After the Kyrie, the ***Gloria*** is said when the Mass requires it. It is sometimes omitted, especially during the penitential seasons, and in the Masses for the dead. At the end the priest kisses the altar.

The Gloria repeats the songs of praise of the angels on Christmas night. In high Masses the most beautiful music is heard from the choir.

The Collect

The priest goes to the epistle side and reads certain prayers, called the ***Collect.*** There may be more than one Collect. These prayers are recited in honor of the saint or mystery of the day, or for the intention of the Mass. They express man's subjection to God.

At the Collect we should pray for the intention we have in hearing the Mass.

The Epistle

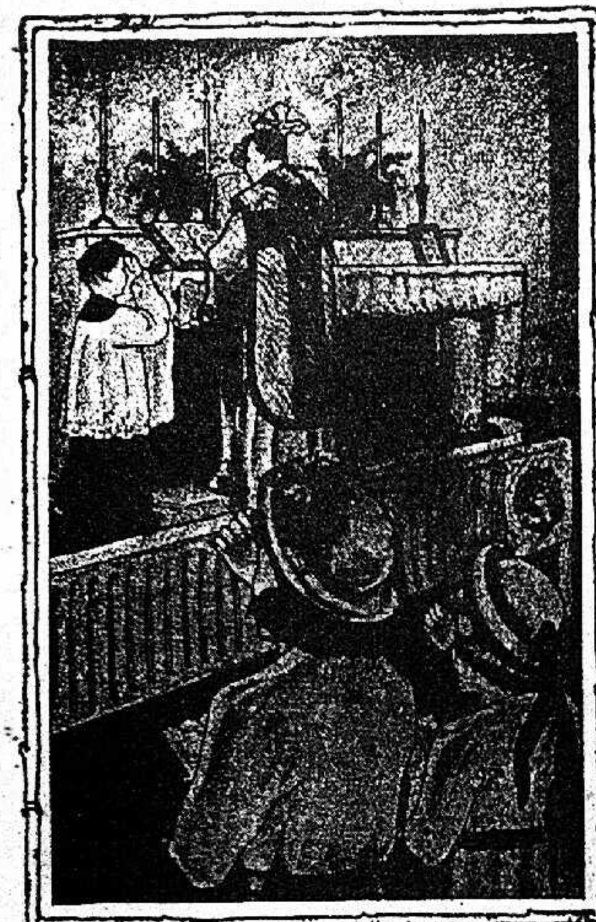
The ***Epistle*** or Lesson follows. It is a reading from Scripture, usually from one of St. Paul's letters. At High Mass the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

Often the Epistle is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, from Exodus, Wisdom, etc. At the end of the Epistle the server says, *"Deo Gratias"* (Thanks be to God).

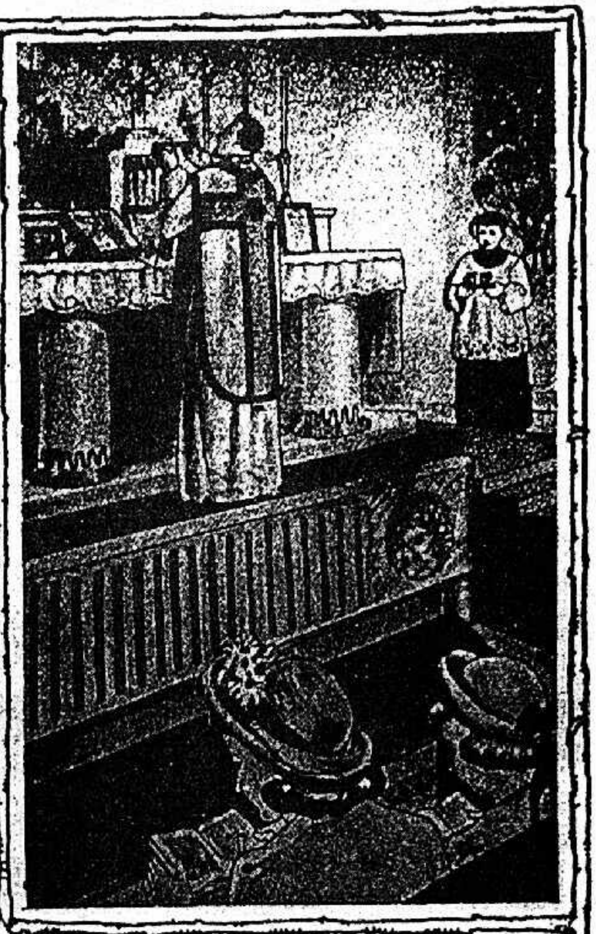
The Gradual

Here follow the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence, all varying in accordance with the season of the ecclesiastical year. Tract and Sequence are not often said.

The Missal is then carried to the left or gospel side of the altar. This act symbolizes the passing of the faith from the Jews to the Gentiles.



Gospel



Offertory

The Gospel

The *Gospel* is taken from one of the four Evangelists. During the reading, the *people stand*, out of reverence for the word of God. The priest begins the reading by crossing himself on the forehead, lips, and breast.

The *people do the same*, to show they believe the Gospel, will always profess it, and will ever love it. At High Mass the Deacon sings the Gospel.

The Credo

After the Gospel the priest on Sundays and holydays of obligation usually preaches a sermon. Often it is an explanation of the Gospel read.

The priest goes to the middle of the altar and recites the *Nicene Creed* or *Credo.* This is not said at all Masses.

At the words, "*Et incarnatus est* (And was made man)", the people genuflect with the priest, in memory of Our Lord's Incarnation. The people may sit down after the Credo.

The Offertory

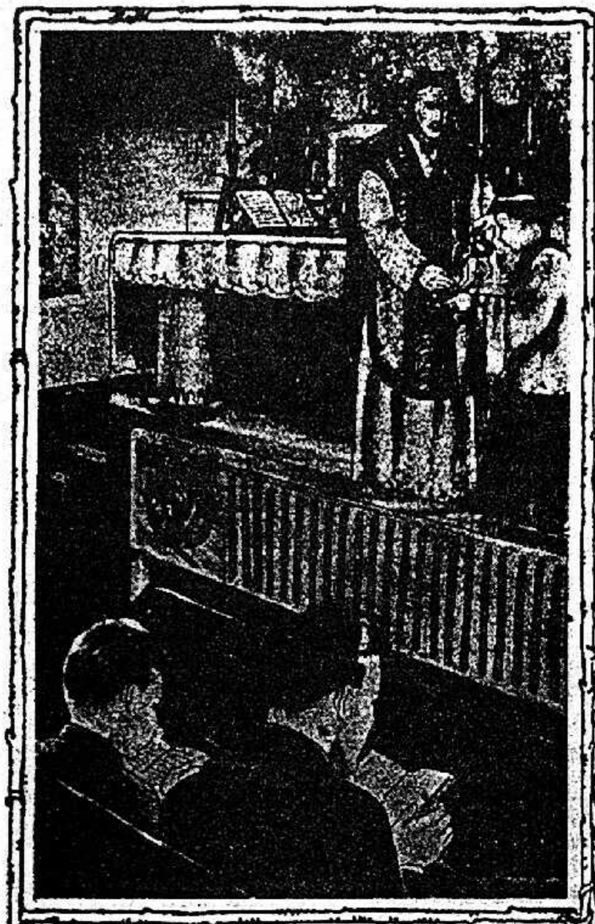
The *Offertory* begins with the Offertory prayer; then the priest uncovers the chalice.

The Offertory is the first of the *three principal* parts of the Mass. It represents Our Lord's preparation for His Passion, and His willingness to surrender His life. The people should *unite themselves* with the priest in making this offering. They should also *offer* themselves and all they have to God. Those who come after this point have *missed Mass,* and must stay to hear another.

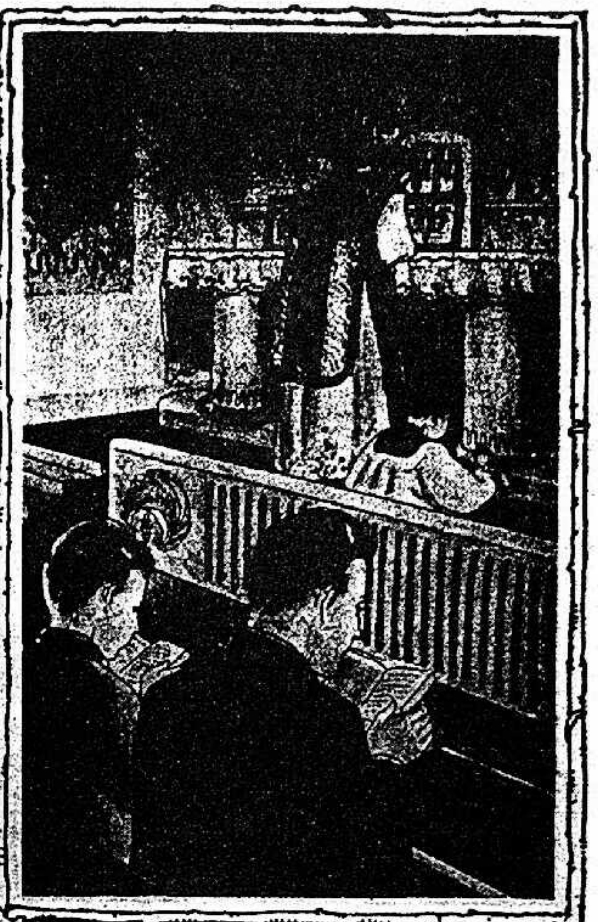
The Offertory consists of two parts: the *offering of the bread* and the *offering of the wine.* The priest offers the bread on the paten, and the wine in the chalice.

Water is mixed with the wine because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

In offering the chalice, the priest says: "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, besseching Thy clemency, that it may ascend before Thy divine Majesty as a sweet savor for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen."



Lavabo



Sanctus

The Lavabo and Orate Fratres

After the Offertory, the priest washes his fingers, as a mark of the purity of body and soul that is required for the Holy Sacrifice. This is the ***Lavabo.***

The priest turns towards the people, extends and joins his hands, and audibly invites them to pray, saying: "*Orate fratres*" (Pray, brethren). The server makes the reply for the people.

The Secret

The priest recites one or more prayers forming the Secret. They are prayers of petition, similar to the Collect.

At the end is said or sung in audible tones: "*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*" (forever and ever).

The Preface and Sanctus

The Preface is a prayer of thanksgiving, varying with the day and season.

The prayer ends with the ***Sanctus.*** This part is indicated by the ringing of the bell three times. The people *kneel*. The priest joins his hands and bows as he says the Sanctus.

The Sanctus represents the entry of Christ in Jerusalem. The people ought to unite themselves with the angels who hail with praises the coming of the Son of God, soon to descend on the altar.

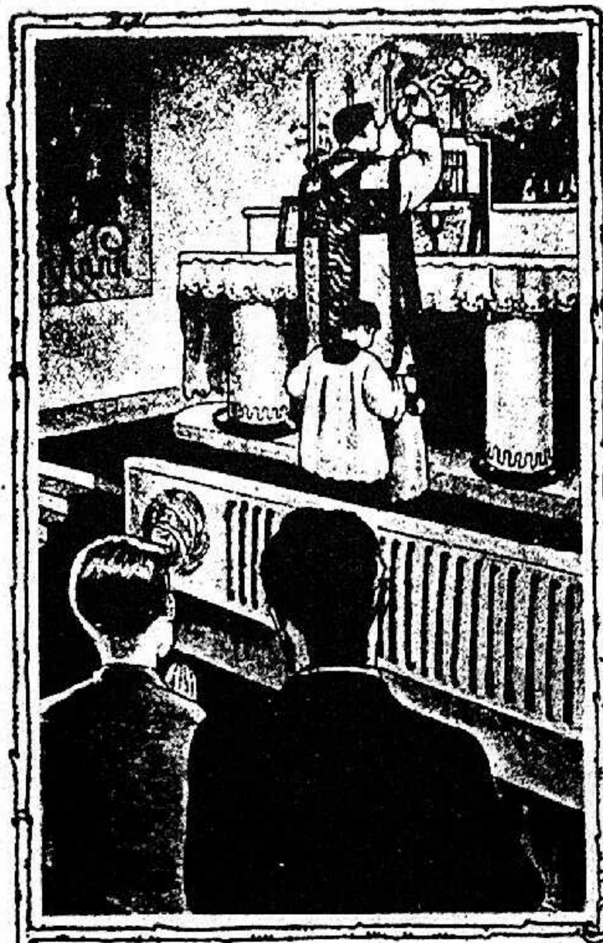
The Canon of the Mass

The ***Canon,*** or most solemn part of the Mass, follows. A remembrance is made for the Church, the Holy Father, the Bishop of the place, and the faithful. The Pope and the Bishop are mentioned by their first names. The ***Memento,*** or prayer for the living, is said. This represents too the prayer of Christ for the Church at the Last Supper. The assistance of the saints is invoked.

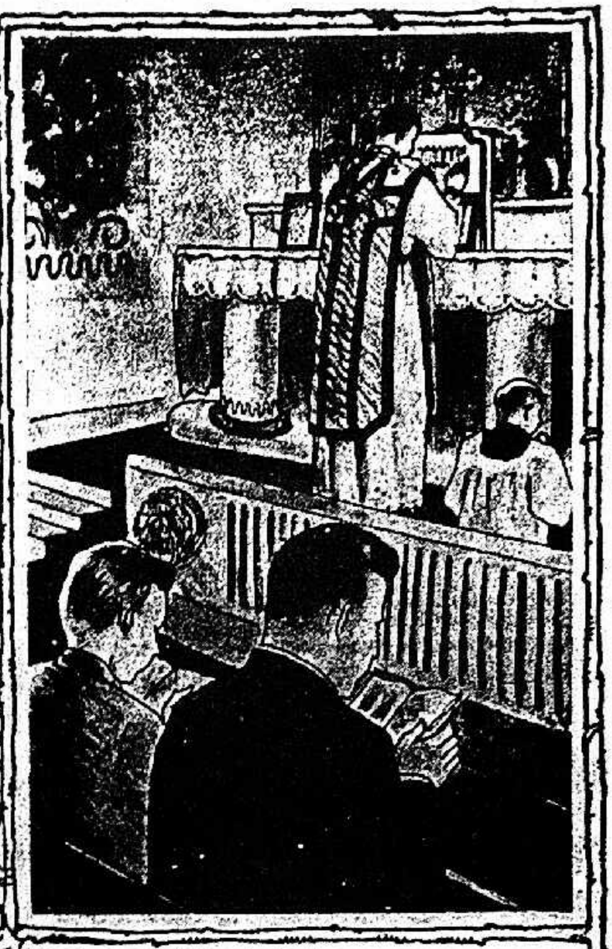
Thus the Church militant and triumphant are united to honor God.

The priest crosses the oblation of bread and wine five times, in honor of the Five Wounds.

The people should recollect themselves in preparation for the consecration.



Elevation



Pater Noster

The Consecration

The *Consecration* is the principal part of the Mass. The words of Christ Himself are spoken over the bread and wine, the same words He used when He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

By them the bread and wine are changed into the living Body and Blood of the Son of God. The bell is rung.

After adoring, the priest elevates first the Host, then the chalice, for the *people to adore.* The *Elevation* commemorates the lifting up of Our Lord on the Cross, when on Calvary He gave up his life in sacrifice.

At the Elevation the people should look upon the Host and chalice and say, *"My Lord and my God,"* then bow their heads and adore. Everyone should be perfectly silent, to welcome and honor with devotion the coming of the King of Kings.

Immediately after the consecration we should make to God the Father an *act of offering* of His Divine Son. We have a worthy gift to offer to God, Christ Himself.

The Commemoration of the Dead

For the souls in Purgatory the priest then prays, remaining silent while he pleads for certain special souls. Then follows a prayer for those present, beginning with the words audibly said, *"Nobis quoque peccatoribus"* (To us also, sinners).

The Pater Noster

The priest recites the *Pater Noster* (Our Father), the prayer taught by Christ Himself. In high Masses, the people stand at the Pater Noster. Then the Priest, breaking the Host in two, puts a small particle of It into the chalice, while he says a prayer.

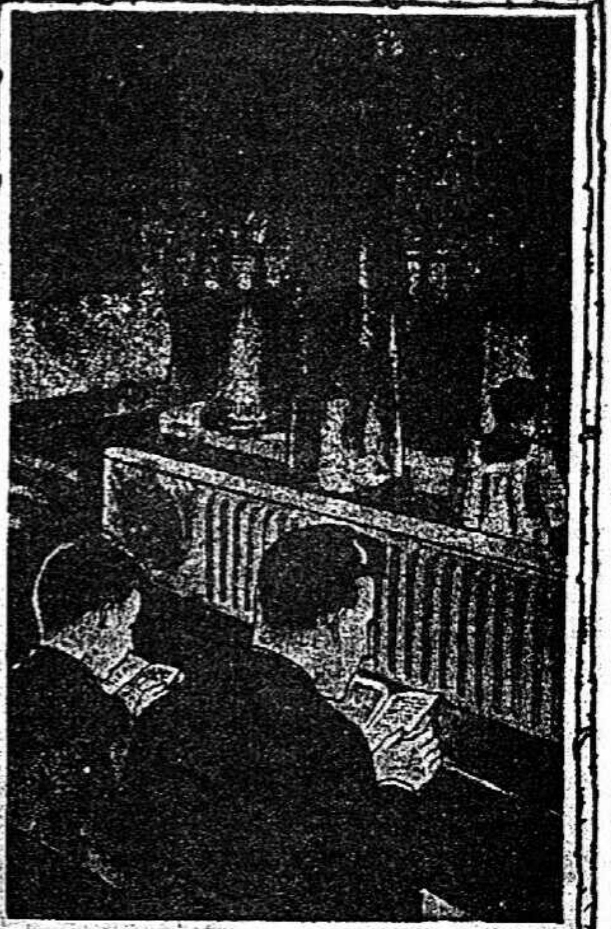
This breaking symbolizes the death of Christ.

The Agnus Dei

The *Agnus Dei* is then said, the priest striking his breast three times in sign of humility and penance: *"Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us."*

At High Masses the Kiss of Peace is given.

"Domine Non Sum Dignus"



Priest's Communion

The Communion

After several prayers of preparation, the sanctuary bell is rung, and the priest gives himself **Communion.** He receives the Body of Christ, saying: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

The priest meditates, then uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation" etc. He then receives the Precious Blood, saying, "The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen".

The Communion is the *third principal part* of Mass, and ends the actual sacrifice. It represents the burial of Christ.

If there are any to receive Communion, the server says the Confiteor in their name. Those who do not communicate should make a *spiritual communion.*

If there are no communicants, the people may *sit* down after the priest's Communion.

Communion of the People

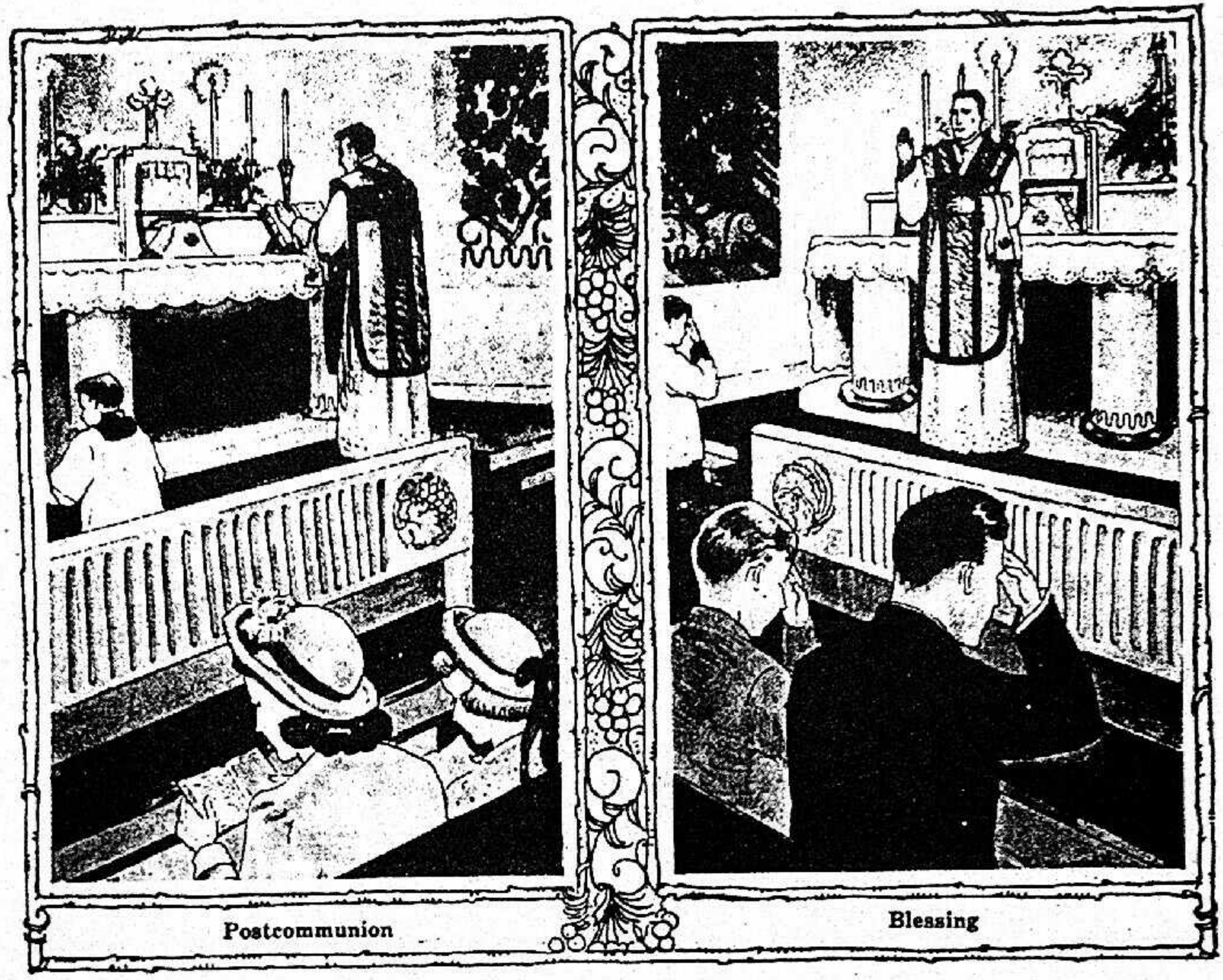
The priest absolves and blesses the people. He takes the ciborium and elevates a small Host in the sight of all, saying, *"Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world!"* He repeats three times the prayer of the centurion to Christ, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant, and says to him: *"May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen."*

After administering Holy Communion to the people, the priest returns to the altar.

The priest takes the ***Ablution;*** that is, he drinks wine and water that are poured into the chalice.

The priest dries the inside of the chalice; folding the corporal, he places it on the chalice as at the beginning of Mass.



Postcommunion

Blessing

The Postcommunion

Going to the Epistle side, the priest reads the ***Communion*** prayer, termed thus because in early days it was sung by the choir while the people received Holy Communion.

At the center again, the priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum*" (The Lord be with you), being answered by the server, "Et cum spiritu tuo" (And with thy spirit).

Once more at the Epistle side, the priest reads the ***Postcommunion*** prayers, petitions to God read or sung like the Collects. At the middle he faces the people and once more says: "*Dominus vobiscum.*"

These greetings are in commemoration of Christ's two appearances to the Apostles immediately after His resurrection.

The Blessing

The priest turns to the people and says: "*Ite, Missa est* (Go, the Mass is ended)."

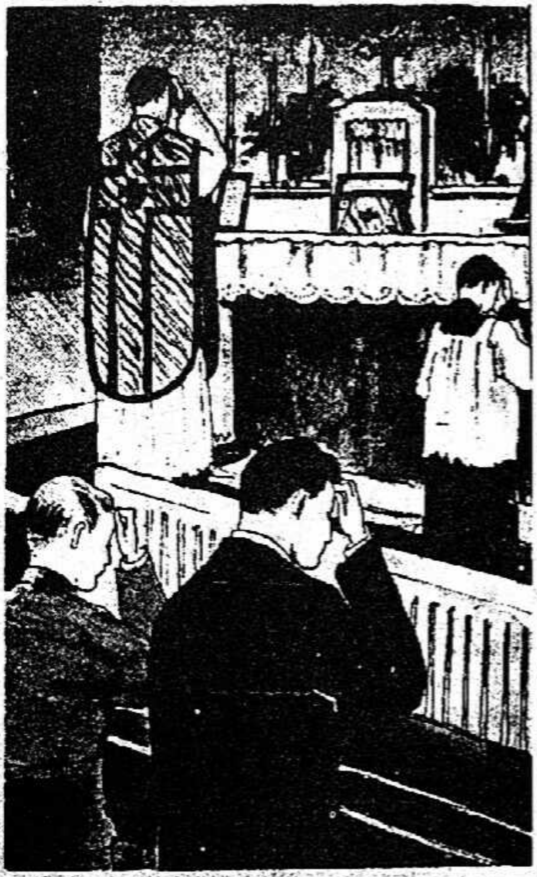
These words of dismissal represent Christ's Ascension, when He sent His Apostles forth to evangelize the world. These words are varied for different occasions. If the *Gloria* has not been said, the words used here are: "*Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord)." In Masses for the dead the words are: "*Requiescant in pace* (May they rest in peace)." In Easter week the words *alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,* are added.

But even with the priest's formal words of dismissal, the people must not leave; the Mass is not yet ended. There is a short prayer to the Blessed Trinity, offering devotion and homage.

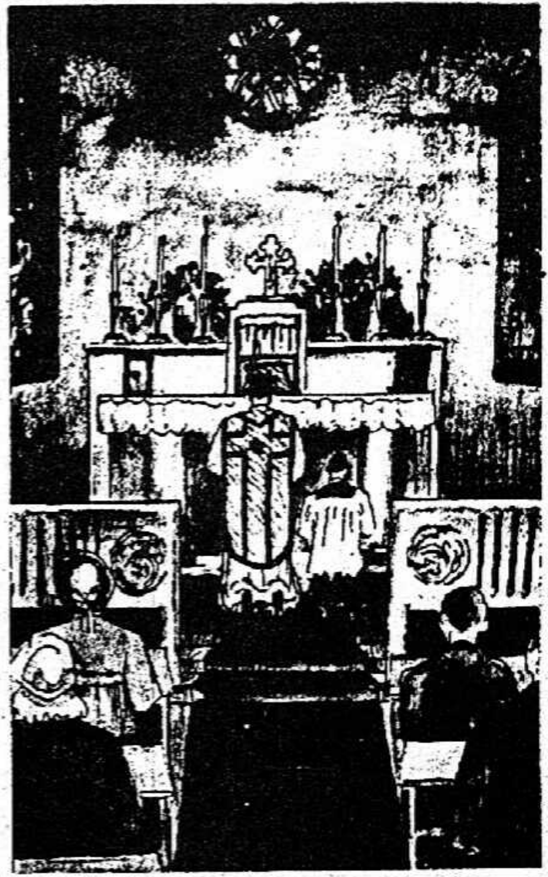
Then the priest kisses the altar, extends, raises, and joins his hands, bows his head, and gives the people the blessing, saying, "May almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you."

The people kneel and make the sign of the cross as the priest ***blesses*** them. A bishop makes three signs of the cross when he blesses at Mass.

At Masses for the dead there is *no blessing,* to show that the Church does not have the same jurisdiction over the dead as over the living.



The Last Gospel



Prayers After Mass

The Last Gospel

The priest turns to the left side to read the ***Last Gospel,*** which is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of St. John. The *people stand* and make three signs of the cross with the priest, on the forehead, lips, and breast. They *genuflect* with the priest at the words: "And the Word was made Flesh," in honor of Christ's Incarnation.

Sometimes another Gospel is read instead. The Last Gospel represents the propagation of the word of God throughout the world after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

At the end of the Last Gospel the *people kneel.* Mass is ended with the words: *"Deo gratias"* (Thanks be to God).

A *votive* Mass is one said in honor of some particular mystery or saint, on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.

Prayers After Mass

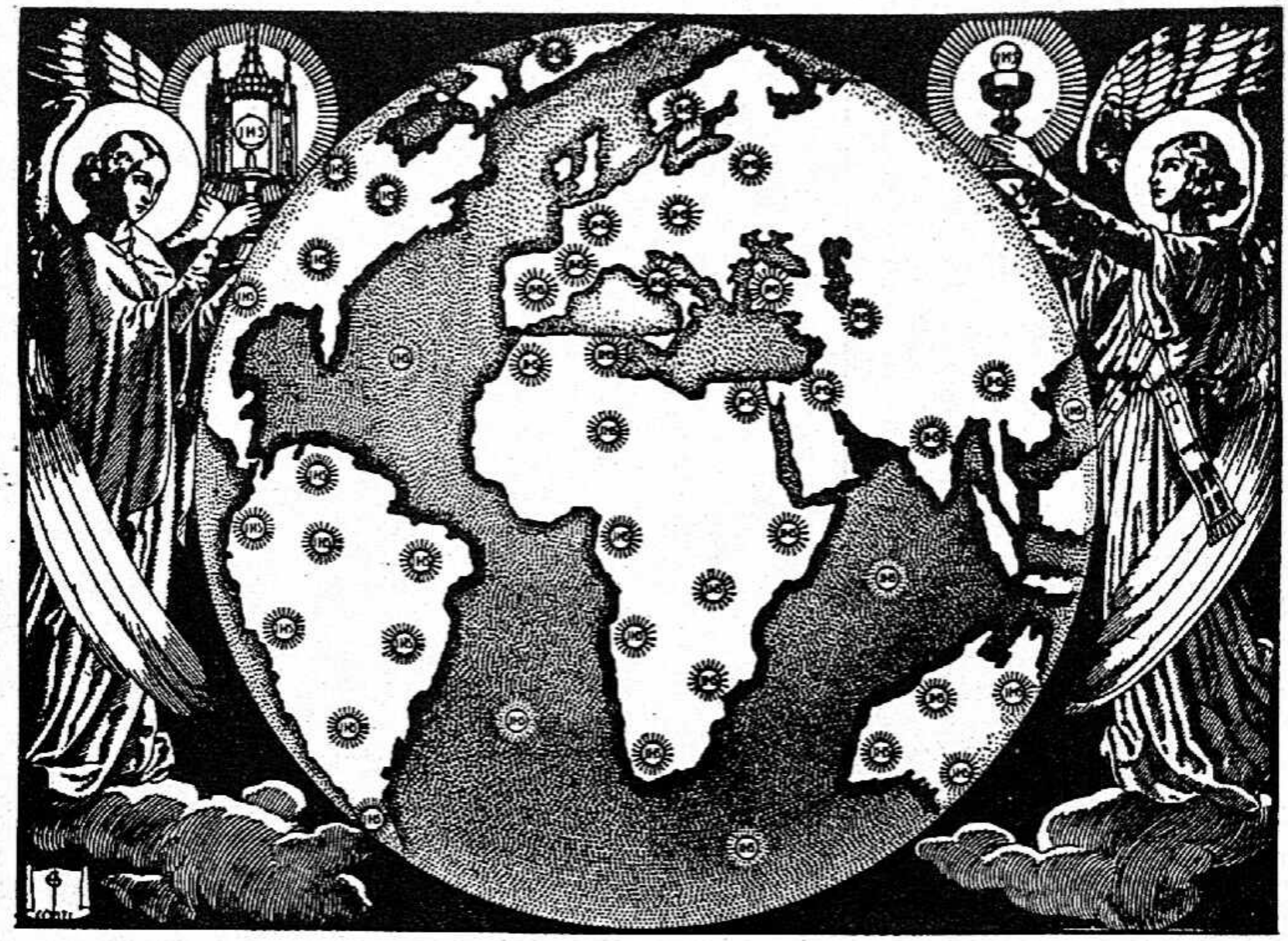
Thus in one-half hour, the time required for an ordinary low Mass, the principal events of Our Lord's life are represented, as well as the chief doctrines of His Church.

In the course of the Mass, the celebrant observes not less than 500 ceremonies, such as bowing, striking the breast, and making the sign of the cross. These ceremonies aim not only to give honor to God, but also to impress upon the faithful the sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice.

After most low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some ***prescribed prayers*** with the people.

All should make the proper responses. No one should leave before the priest. Everybody should *stand* when the priest leaves the sanctuary.

No requiem Mass is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.



In all parts of the world Jesus Christ is truly and substantially present in the most Blessed Sacrament of the altar. Wherever we go, we can pay Our Lord a visit in the Blessed Sacrament. Wherever we go, we can receive Our Lord corporally in Holy Communion, to refresh and sustain our souls. When we visit a town or city, we should first of all pay a visit to our Eucharistic Lord.

141. Holy Communion

What is Holy Communion?—Holy Communion is the receiving of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

1. "Communion" means a *uniting* or *sharing together*. In Holy Communion Christ and our soul are intimately united, and we share the banquet of the Lord's table.

When Napoleon the Great was at the height of his power, one of his generals asked him once what had been the happiest day of his life. Expecting to hear the Emperor name a great battle, the general was surprised to hear him say, "My happiest day was the day of my first Holy Communion, for then I was brought nearest to my God."

2. Christ *commanded* us to receive Holy Communion when He said: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (John 6:54). It is the food of our souls.

Holy Communion increases in us the life of grace. During the persecution against Christianity in China, the grace given to the martyrs was noticed by the pagans themselves. The victims were cruelly scourged and tortured, but they continued firm in their faith and professed it openly and fearlessly. The infidels, amazed at such fortitude, said, "Truly, these people have been eating of that Eucharistic Bread which they partake of in their assemblies. It casts a spell upon their souls."

3. It is not necessary for us to receive Holy Communion under *both kinds:* under the forms of both bread and wine. It is sufficient to receive Holy Communion under one kind, for Christ is present whole and entire under each form of bread or wine. According to the Latin rite, which

we follow, the laity is permitted to receive communion only under the *form of bread*.

As this is a matter of *discipline*, and not of doctrine, the practice of the Church has varied. In the Oriental rite, both kinds are still administered to the laity. Our present usage is more convenient, and more accommodated to our needs.

4. ***Spiritual communion*** is a fervent desire to receive Christ, when we cannot do so sacramentally. It may be made at all times and in all places.

It should be made at Mass and in visits to the Blessed Sacrament. It merits graces for us, and unites us with Christ spiritually.

When are we obliged to receive Holy Communion?—We are obliged to receive Holy Communion during Easter time each year, and when in danger of death.

1. Our Lord *commanded* us to receive Holy Communion. The Church enforces this command by requiring us under pain of grievous sin to communicate at the *Easter time*.

This is called the Paschal Communion, part of our *Easter duty*. However, the Church desires us to go more frequently to Holy Communion.

2. The *obligation* of Holy Communion begins when a child comes to the use of reason. Children generally come to the use of reason in their seventh year.

The seventh year begins on the sixth birthday, when the child completes six years of life. The full use of reason is not required for the first Communion.

3. The child should be *properly prepared* to receive the sacrament. He does not need to know the entire catechism. It is sufficient for him to have a general knowledge of the truths necessary for salvation, and a becoming devotion. Above all, he should know what and Whom he is going to receive.

Pope Pius X is called "the children's Pope" because he revived the custom of the first Christians of allowing children to receive Holy Communion when they came to the use of reason. In some countries the practice had been introduced of making children wait until they were twelve years old before they were permitted to receive Holy Communion.

4. Those in *danger of death* are bound to receive Holy Communion. If a person is seriously ill, the priest should be summoned at once. Children in danger of death should be given Holy Communion, provided they know the difference between common food and the Eucharist, and adore It reverently.

Why is it well to receive Holy Communion often, even daily?—It is well to receive Holy Communion often, even daily, because this intimate union with Jesus Christ, the Source of all holiness and the Giver of all graces, is the greatest aid to a holy life.

1. Good Catholics should go to Holy Communion at least *once a month,* or better, every time they hear Mass. Fervent Catholics communicate daily. If the body cannot do without food, how can the soul?

A young man once was known to be extremely attached to his father. Several times he asserted that there was nothing he would not do for his father. He even said that if necessary, he would die for his father, just to please him. One day, a friend said, "Your father is in the next room, waiting to see you. He has waited there a long time." And the young man answered, "Oh, I am too busy. I just saw him last week. Let him wait a year; then I shall visit him."

What would you think of such a young man? He is the type of many Catholics today, who receive Communion only at Easter.

2. If we have the proper dispositions, we may *communicate daily,* except on Good Friday. Early Christians communicated daily.

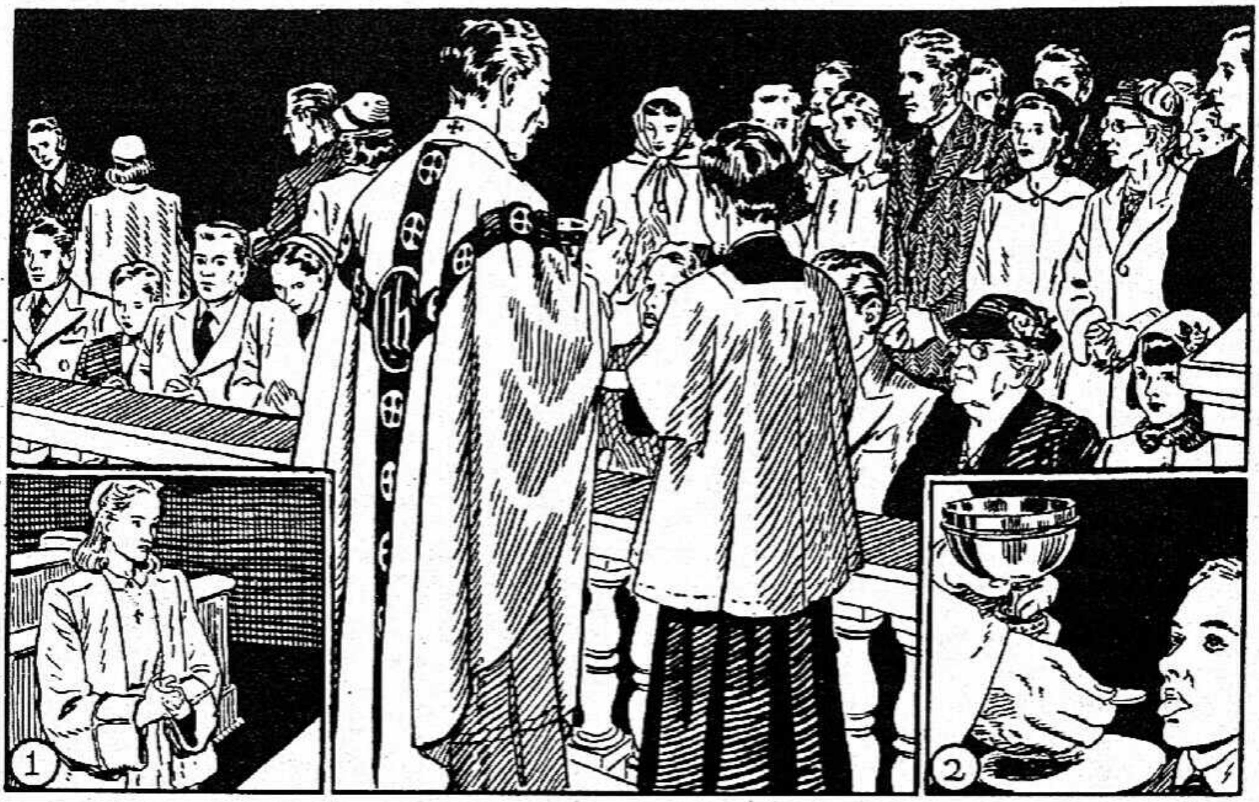
Persons who are accustomed to communicate daily do not need to *go to confession* daily. They should go to confession weekly, or twice a month, unless they fall into mortal sin, when they should be sorry and go to confession at once.

3. Some persons say that they are *not good enough* to go to daily communion. They should remember that the Eucharist is not meant as a reward of virtue, but as an aid towards the attainment of virtue.

So long as one is in the *state of grace* and has the right intention, he should receive Holy Communion as often as he can. The Holy Eucharist was not instituted for angels, but for men.

4. Holy Communion may be received *only once a day* except when one happens to fall dangerously ill, and receives the Viaticum.

Holy Communion is usually distributed at Mass, or immediately before or after it. It may be given at any hour at which it is permitted to say Mass, —whether in the morning or in the afternoon,— provided one observes the Eucharistic fast.



This is how we should kneel at the communion rail. We should not crowd or push. (1) shows how to approach and leave the communion rail, with joined hands and downcast eyes.

(2) shows how to receive Holy Communion. We open the mouth and extend the tongue a little over the lower lip. Meanwhile, let us welcome Jesus Christ into a joyful heart.

142. Dispositions for Holy Communion

What is necessary to receive Holy Communion worthily?—To receive Holy Communion worthily it is necessary to be free from mortal sin, and to keep the Eucharistic fast.

The first requirement is for the soul; the second is for the body.

What should we do to comply with the required disposition for the soul?—We must be in a state of grace.

1. One who knowingly receives Holy Communion in mortal sin ***truly receives Jesus Christ,*** but commits sacrilege.

The first bad communion was made by Judas. He had promised to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Yet he went to the Last Supper, and received Holy Communion from the hands of Our Lord.

2. One is not required to *go to confession* before each communion, but only when he is conscious of grievous sin.

If he only doubts whether he committed mortal sin or not, he may still go to Holy Communion after an act of contrition.

3. If without a person's fault he *forgets* in confession to accuse himself of a mortal sin, it is forgiven with his other sins, and he may go to Holy Communion.

He must, however, mention the sin he forgot when he goes again to confession.

4. One who commits a *mortal sin* after confession and, not realizing it, goes to Holy Communion, does not make a bad communion.

One makes a bad communion only when one is certain and conscious of being in mortal sin, and still deliberately receives Holy Communion.

5. Venial sins do not and should not *prevent* our going to Holy Communion.

However, the purer our conscience, the more graces we receive from the sacrament; so we should make *an act of contrition* beforehand.

6. Before receiving Holy Communion, we should try to have an *ardent desire* to

be united with Christ, and arouse sentiments of faith, humility, hope, and love.

Let us try to bring to our Eucharistic Lord some gift, however small. Let us avoid places of amusement the night before we receive Him in Holy Communion, as a little sacrifice. Let us pray devoutly and continuously, to show Him the joy in our hearts at His coming.

What should we do to comply with the required disposition for the body?—We must keep the Eucharistic fast.

1. The regulations for keeping the Eucharistic fast are:

(a) *Natural water* — that is, water to which nothing has been added — does not break the Eucharistic fast.

We may drink natural water any time we wish, even a few moments before entering the church to prepare for Holy Communion. Artificial mineral waters, like soda, or water to which a little sugar has been added, is not to be considered natural water for the Eucharistic fast.

(b) When Holy Communion is received *in the morning,* we must be fasting from midnight; that is, we must not take anything by way of food or drink, except natural water, after midnight.

In reckoning the time of fasting for Holy Communion, we may follow the meridian (or sun) time, standard time, or daylight-saving time. If in doubt whether he ate or drank before or after twelve, one may go to Holy Communion.

(c) When Holy Communion is received *in the afternoon* (that is, after four o'clock), we must stop taking *solid food* not later than three hours before Holy Communion, and *liquid food,*—which must be non-alcoholic—not later than one hour before.

If Holy Communion should be distributed at 4:30 p.m., we must stop taking solid food by 1:30 p.m. and liquid food by 3:30 p.m. *Liquid food* taken *in the form of drink* includes: coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, milk shake, broth, milk, or any other liquids, even mixed with something solid—like wheat meal, or ground toast, or a beaten egg—provided the liquid form remains.

2. Those who wish to receive Holy Communion in the morning, but find it difficult to fast under the following *particular circumstances,* may take something in the form of drink (provided it is non-alcoholic), up to one hour before receiving Holy Communion. This they may do *only* after seeking the advice of a confessor, either personally in the confessional, or personally outside of it. The confessor is the one to decide whether their difficulties entitle them to take liquid food up to one hour before Holy Communion.

The particular circumstances are:

(a) *Heavy labor* carried out before Holy Communion. This labor is of those who have to work during the night, like night workmen in factories, nurses, night watchmen, pregnant women, and mothers of families who before going to church must spend a long time on domestic duties.

(b) The *late hour* at which Holy Communion is received; that is, at a Mass said after 9:00 a.m. has struck.

(c) A *long journey* to get to church. This must be at least one and a fourth miles covered on foot, or a corresponding longer distance by vehicle, according to the vehicle used, and taking into consideration the difficulties of the route and the condition of the person.

3. After seeking the personal advice of a confessor, the *sick*—even those not bedridden—may, with no limit of time, also shortly before Holy Communion, whether in the morning or in the afternoon, take something in the form of drink (provided it is non-alcoholic).

They may also take medicine, either solid or liquid, but the liquid medicines must not be alcoholic.

4. Those who receive the Holy Viaticum are not bound by the law of fasting.

In case of great danger of death, under sentence of death, or in war, or to save the sacred species from desecration, those not fasting may communicate.

How should we behave when receiving Holy Communion?—Devout and recollected, we should think of the Lord Whom we are receiving, and make fervent acts of virtue.

1. In approaching the communion rail one should have his *hands joined,* and not walk too hurriedly, nor rush ahead of others, nor insert himself between two persons already kneeling close to each other at the rail.

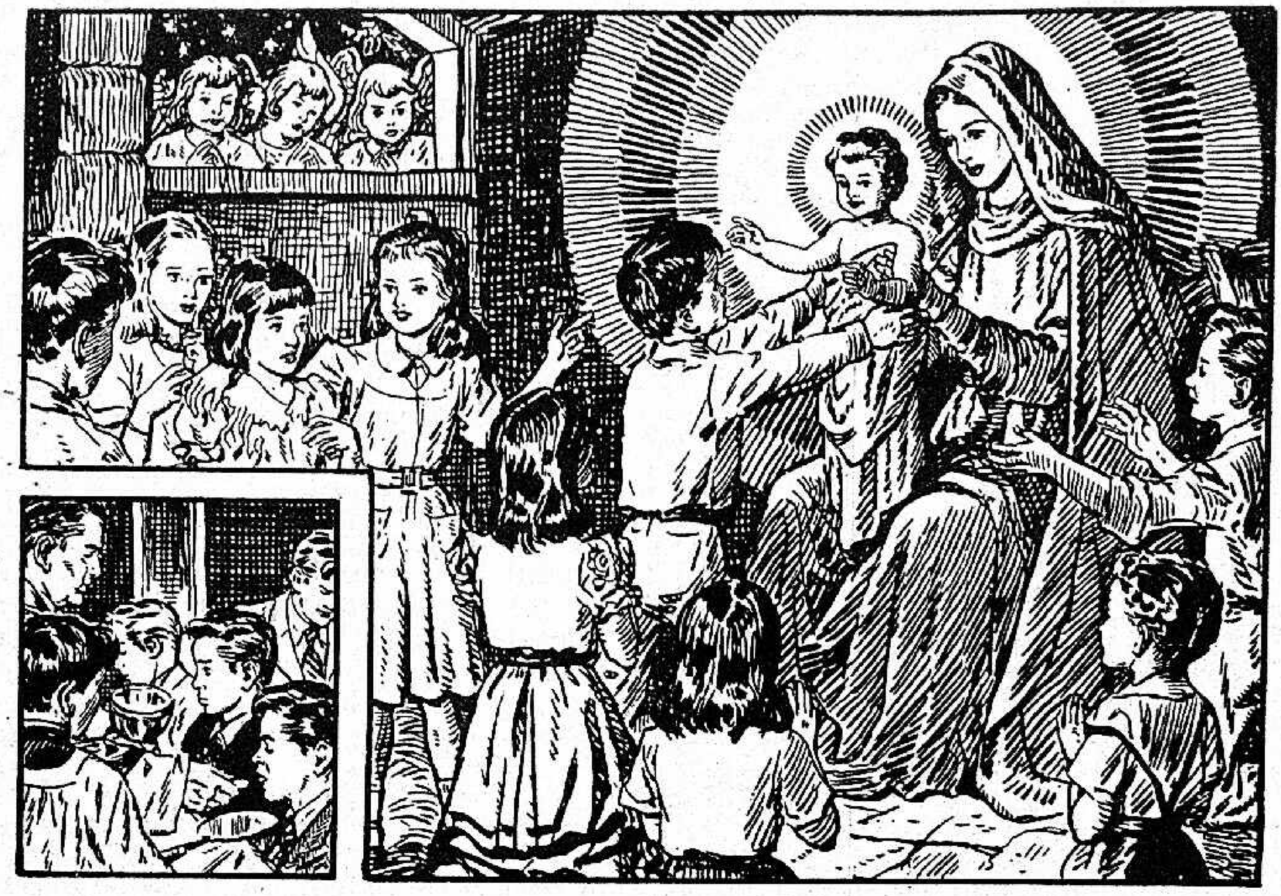
It is very irreverent for *women and girls* to go to Holy Communion with sleeveless dresses, low necks, and no stockings. The paint of their lipstick may possibly touch the Sacred Host.

2. When the priest approaches, one should raise his head and *open his mouth,* with the tongue slightly extended over the lower lip.

After Communion, he should withdraw to give room for others, and return to his place with joined hands and downcast eyes.

3. One should *swallow* the host as soon as he can. Jesus stays with us only as the appearances of bread remain.

If the host sticks to the mouth, we must on no account remove it with the finger, but moisten it with saliva, and *remove it with the tongue,* then swallow it.



We should receive Our Lord in the Eucharist with the faith and love of a child. Children receiving Holy Communion ought to think of themselves approaching to take the Child Jesus from the arms of our Blessed Lady. With how much love and adoration, with what joy we should receive Jesus into our arms, if the Blessed Virgin should appear before us to give Him to us! Yet Holy Communion is really better than that: we not only receive Jesus into our arms, but into our very hearts.

143. Graces from the Holy Eucharist

What are the chief effects of a worthy Holy Communion?—The chief effects of a worthy Holy Communion are:

1. A closer *union* with Our Lord, and a more fervent love of God and of our neighbor. What food and drink do for the body, the Eucharist does for the soul. It unites our body and soul to that of Christ.

In Holy Communion we become united with Christ, as He Himself promised, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him" (John 6:57).

2. An increase of *sanctifying grace.* Holy Communion makes us more pleasing to God by an increase of grace, making us live in Him and made like unto Him.

As St. Thomas says, "As an offshoot from a good tree, when grafted upon a wild one, draws out its bitter taste, and makes it bear good fruit, so the body of Jesus Christ, when ingrafted in us, corrects our faults, and enables us to bring forth fruits of justice like unto those He Himself performs."

3. *Preservation* from mortal sin and the remission of venial sin.

Holy Communion preserves us from falling back into sin by lessening the violence of our passions and temptations, and by infusing new light into our souls, by which we see the power and folly of sin. As food repairs bodily waste, so Holy Communion repairs waste in the soul, caused by faults.

4. The lessening of our *inclinations* to sin, and the help to practice good works. To receive more abundantly the graces of Holy Communion, we should strive to be most fervent and free ourselves from deliberate venial sin.

Holy Communion gives our soul an extraordinary vigor. As our bodily life depends on the union of our body with our soul, so our supernatural life depends upon the union of our soul with God. The closer this union, the more vigorous will be our supernatural life; in Holy Communion our soul is more closely united with God than if we melted two pieces of wax into one.

What should we do after Holy Communion? — After Holy Communion we should spend some time adoring Our Lord, thanking Him, renewing our promises of love and of obedience to Him, and asking Him for blessings for ourselves and others.

1. We *should not leave* the church immediately after receiving Holy Communion. We should pray at least ten or fifteen minutes, thanking our Divine Guest. We should thank Our Lord fervently for coming to us, make acts of faith, adoration, humility, and love, and beg Him favors for ourselves and those we love.

Our Lord is actually and personally present in us as long as the appearance of bread remains, for at least ten minutes after receiving Holy Communion. Shall we treat God the Son coldly, by doing nothing when He comes? For earthly guests we exert ourselves to the utmost, to entertain them and make their stay enjoyable. Shall we then say to Christ, "I am glad You came, Lord. Now goodby, because I must go home." And forget Him?

2. If our work or duties prevent our staying in church to give proper thanksgiving, let us remain *recollected* and in union with Jesus on our way home; and let us remember Him with love throughout the entire day.

Once St. Philip Neri noticed that a certain parishioner, for no reason, habitually left the church immediately after receiving Holy Communion. In order to correct him, he told two acolytes one day to accompany the man with lighted candles as he walked home. The acolytes did as they were told. The people in the streets stared in surprise, and the man seeing his escort asked them the reason for their following him. They replied that Father Philip Neri had so instructed them. The man returned to the church to find out St. Philip's purpose. The Saint answered, "We have to pay proper respect to Our Lord, Whom you are carrying away with you. Since you neglect to adore Him, I sent two acolytes to take your place." Realizing his fault, the man knelt and made the proper thanksgiving after Holy Communion.

How should we show our gratitude to Our Lord for remaining always on our altars in the Holy Eucharist?—We should show our gratitude to Our Lord for remaining always on our altars in the Holy Eucharist by visiting Him often, by reverence in church, by assisting at weekday Mass when this is possible, by attending parish devotions, and by being present at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

1. Paying *visits* to the Blessed Sacrament is a loving gesture towards Our Lord really present there. He is our best Friend, and shall we not pay Him a call once in a while?

Wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, a light must always be kept burning before It. Olive oil should be used; in case of necessity the bishop may permit the use of a substitute. Where more than one lamp is used, their number must be uneven. The use of the sanctuary lamp dates back to the thirteenth century.

2. *Benediction* of the Blessed Sacrament is an act of worship in which the Sacred Host, placed in the monstrance, is exposed to the people for adoration, and is lifted up to bless them. Cardinal Newman said of Benediction, "It is Our Lord's solemn benediction of His people, as when He lifted up His hands over His children, or when He blessed His chosen ones when He ascended up from Mount Olivet."

At Benediction, the priest uses the *cope*, which is a large silk cloak enveloping his entire body. On his shoulders he uses a *humeral* or shoulder veil, with which he holds up the monstrance in blessing.

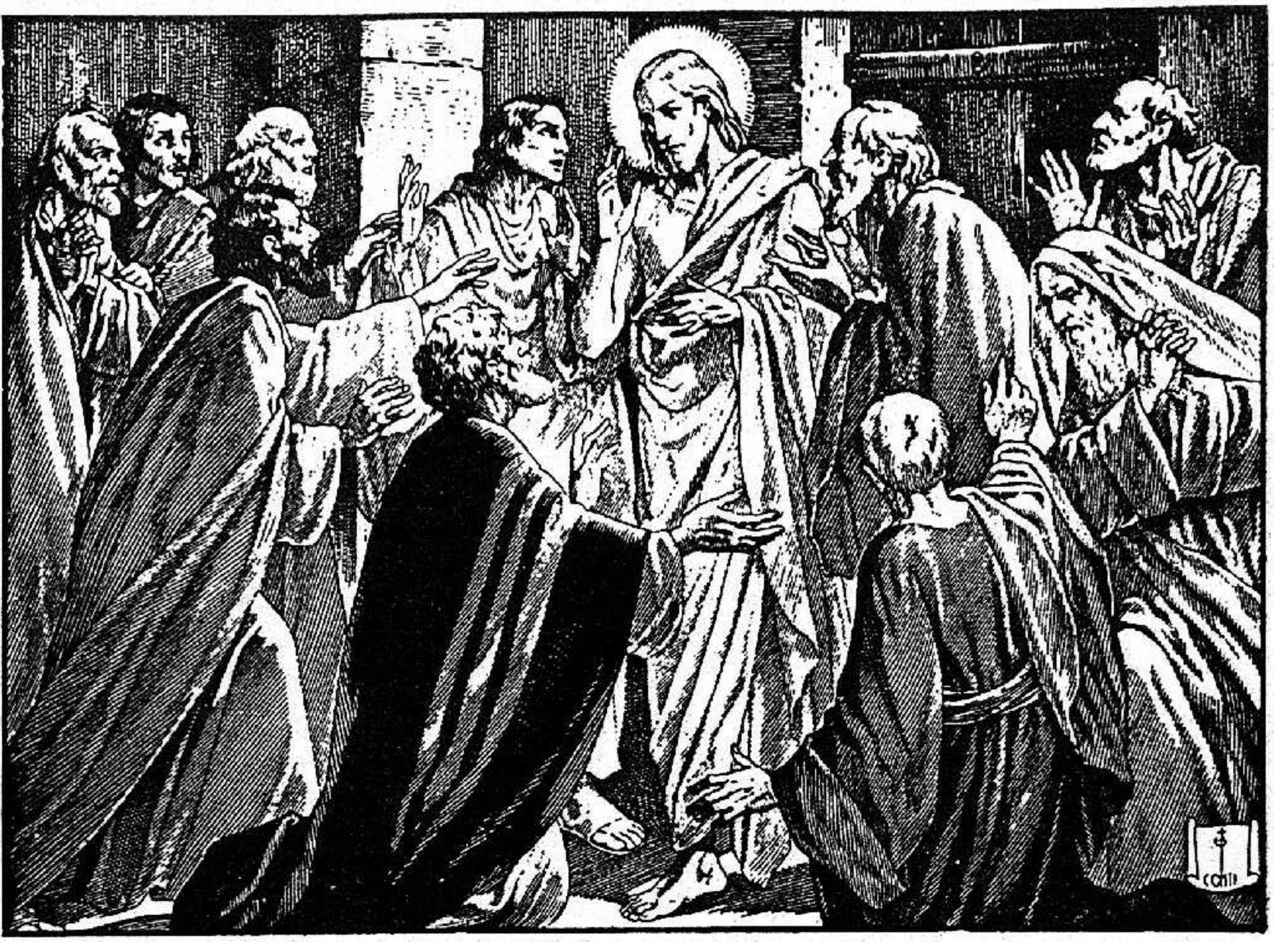
At Benediction, at least twelve candles must be used on the altar, and the Sacred Host must be incensed twice,—immediately after the Exposition, and at the second stanza of the *Tantum ergo*.

3. The *Holy Hour* is a devotion in honor of Our Lord. It is often made before the Blessed Sacrament, although this is not necessary to gain the indulgences. The devotion consists of an hour of mental or vocal prayer in union with the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Olives, in honor of His agony.

The Holy Hour may be made either in public or in private. If in public, it must be made in church or chapel any hour of the day of any day in the week.

4. The Devotion of the *Forty Hours* is a favorite devotion related to the Holy Eucharist.

A relay of worshippers take turns at adoration, watching and praying. On the altar at least 20 candles are kept burning continually. This devotion appears to have developed from the Corpus Christi Processions. (*See pages* 386-387.)



The picture shows Our Lord instituting the sacrament of Penance on the first Easter Sunday night. He breathed on the Apostles and said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20.23).

Our Lord had previously promised Peter the right to forgive sins, saying: "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19).

144. The Sacrament of Penance

What is the sacrament of Penance?— Penance is the sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through the absolution of the priest.

Penance prompts the sinner to detest his sins, and incites him to offer satisfaction for them, and to amend his life in the future.

1. Penance has the three *essentials* of a sacrament.

(a) It is a *sensible sign; i. e.* the words of absolution with the act of confession.

Our Lord *promised* to give Peter the power to forgive sins, saying to him, "And whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19). Christ later made the same promise to the other Apostles, saying, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. 18:18).

(b) It was instituted *by Jesus Christ* on the first Easter Sunday night.

On the first Easter Sunday night, Our Lord *fulfilled* His promise to give His Apostles the power to forgive sins. Jesus appeared to His Apostles and said: "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you." When He had said this, He breathed upon them and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23).

(c) It confers *grace*. It is the way by which after Baptism sanctifying grace is restored to the penitent who has committed mortal sin. It increases this grace in the penitent who already possesses it. It also gives actual graces.

When one cannot go to confession, then he should make an act of perfect contrition at once, for his sin's forgiveness.

2. The priest forgives sins with the words: *"I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."*

This is called the *"absolution"*, and is said by the priest over the penitent, with uplifted hand, when he forgives the sins confessed. It is pronounced while the penitent is saying an Act of Contrition.

3. On the part of *the penitent*, the sacrament of Penance includes three distinct acts: (a) contrition or sorrow for his sins; (b) confession or telling them to the priest; and (c) satisfaction or performance of the penance imposed by the priest.

A penitent is absolved if he confesses his sins with sorrow and a resolution to atone for them and amend his life.

Why must we receive the sacrament of Penance?—We must receive the sacrament of Penance, because our Lord Jesus Christ commanded it, when He said to the Apostles and to their successors in the priesthood: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

"Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him . . . and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. 5:14, 15).

1. The power to *forgive sins* was not given to the Apostles alone, but also to their successors, the bishops and priests of the Church, until the end of time.

The forgiveness of sins was surely not granted only to those people living at the time of the Apostles, but for all who, to the end of the world, should need forgiveness.

2. These words of Christ *oblige* us to confess our sins, because the priest cannot know whether he should forgive or retain our sins unless we tell them to him. In order to be able to give a just decision the priest must know the facts of each case. Thus the penitent must tell his sins. He is his own accuser and his own witness.

Even in a civil court, the judge makes no decision without knowing the facts of the case. A trial is conducted with accusers and witnesses against the person accused. The priest is *the judge*, and he must learn from the penitent himself whether he should give absolution, and what would be a just penance to impose.

3. The Church commands us to confess *at least once a year*. All Catholics, including the Pope, cardinals, bishops, etc., are subject to this law. Good Catholics confess at least once a month, or even once a week. If we are so unfortunate as to have committed a mortal sin, we should go to confession at once.

What would you think of a person who met with an accident at New Year and is near death if he says: "No, do not call the doctor. I shall go to him at Easter"?

4. The *practice* of confessing to a priest has been continuous in the Church from the time of the Apostles. We read in Holy Scripture that in the time of the Apostles, the Christian converts came to them, and openly confessed their practices (Acts 19:18).

In the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, in the very first centuries of the Christian era, the faithful are often advised and exhorted to confess their sins. St. Augustine says, "It is not enough that one acknowledge his sins to God, from whom nothing is hidden; he must also confess them to a priest, God's representative."

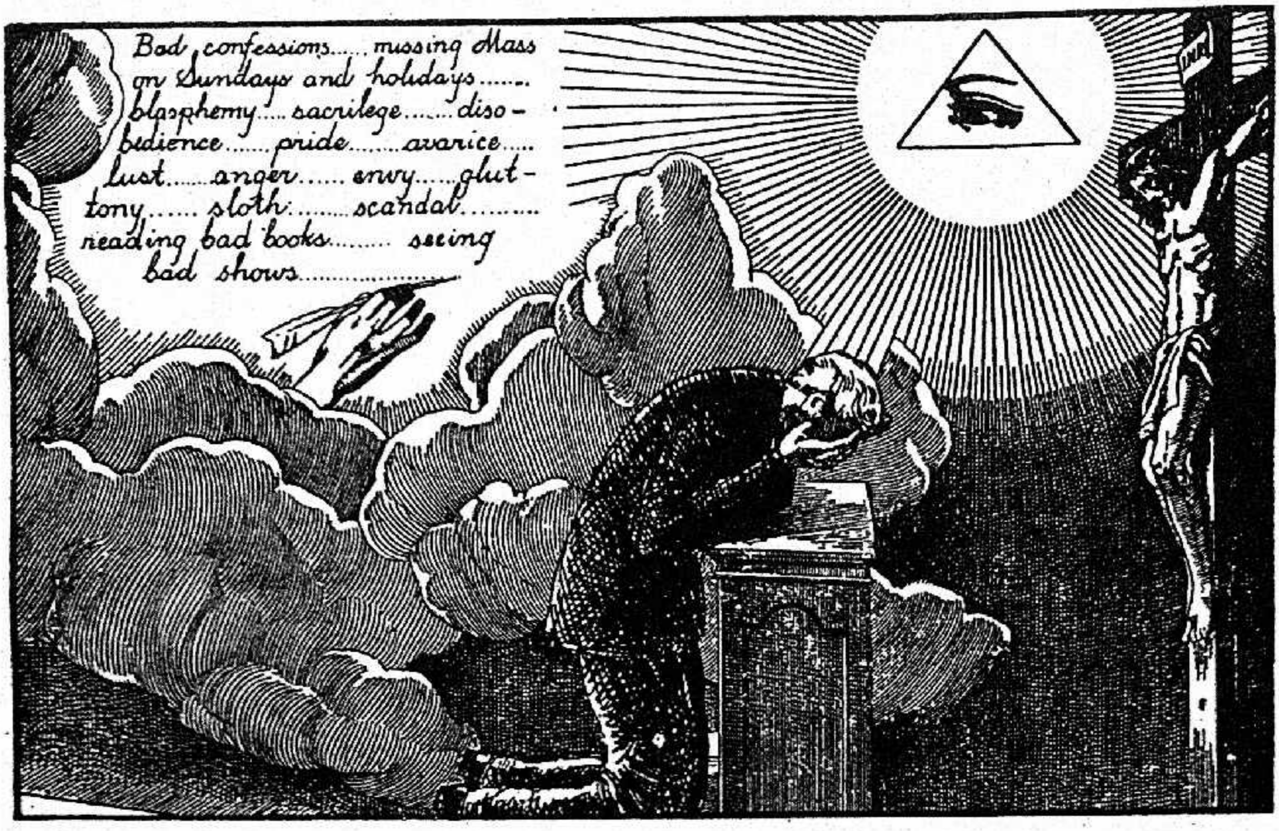
St. John said in encouragement: "My dear children, these things I write to you in order that you may not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just" (1 John 2:1).

Can all priests administer the sacrament of Penance?—No; only those priests authorized to do so can administer the sacrament of Penance.

1. The bishop gives *authority* (called "the faculties") to hear confessions in his diocese. Certain grave sins are reserved to the Pope or the bishop for absolution. These are called "reserved cases": as when one joins Masonry, gets married before a non-Catholic minister, or desecrates a sacred Host.

A priest authorized in one diocese must get the faculties in order to hear confessions in any other diocese. Priests are like civil magistrates, who cannot pass sentence on all cases, but only on those for which they have jurisdiction.

2. Every Catholic priest, however, even if suspended or excommunicated, has power to absolve all the sins of a *dying person.*


Bad confessions..... missing Mass
on Sundays and holidays......
blasphemy.... sacrilege....... diso-
bedience...... pride....... avarice.....
lust...... anger..... envy..... glut-
tony...... sloth........ scandal........
reading bad books........ seeing
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In our examination of conscience, we must make a careful scrutiny, as if we were to appear at that moment before the judgment seat of God. We must not, however, be scrupulous, remembering that God is a just and merciful God, who does not expect what is beyond our power. By the examination we learn to know ourselves, our weaknesses, our temptations, our sins. During the examination of conscience we should decide how we are to tell our sins, so that we may be clear and brief.

145. Examination of Conscience

What must we do to receive the sacrament of Penance worthily?—We must:

1. Examine our conscience.

By the ***examination of conscience*** we recall the sins committed since our last good confession.

2. Be sorry for our sins.

By ***contrition***, or sorrow for sins, we express to God our grief that we have disobeyed Him, that we have been His unfaithful children.

3. Have a firm purpose not to sin again.

By this ***purpose of amendment*** we sincerely promise God not to fall again into the sins we confess.

4. Confess our sins to the priest.

The act of telling our sins to the priest is called ***Confession.***

5. Be willing to perform the penance the priest gives us.

The performance of the penance after confession is called ***satisfaction,*** for by that act we try to repair the damage our sins have done.

To receive the sacrament of Penance worthily, we must imitate the Prodigal Son:

(1) He thought over the evil he had done, and acknowledged it *(examination of conscience)*.

(2) He realized his ingratitude towards his good father, and grieved with all his heart *(contrition)*.

(3) He made up his mind to return to his father and from thenceforth to change his ways *(purpose of amendment)*.

(4) Upon his return, he fell at his father's feet, confessed the evil he had done, and begged pardon for it *(confession)*.

(5) He implored his father not to treat him as a son, but as a mere servant *(satisfaction)*.

What is an examination of conscience?—An examination of conscience is a sincere effort to call to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

1. Before our examination of conscience we should ask *God's help* to know our sins and to confess them with sincere sorrow.

Without His grace, we can neither know our sins nor feel sorrow for them.

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ex. 33:11).

2. The examination of conscience is important, for by it we learn to *know ourselves*, and so find means of improvement. How many men there are who know innumerable things about nature, science, literature, and law, and yet have never even peered into their own souls!

Self-knowledge is a gift of God, that we implore in prayer. If we have self-knowledge, we shall be sure of avoiding the self-complacency that is the obstacle to a sincere examination of conscience.

How can we make a good examination of conscience?—We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to mind the commandments of God and of the Church, and the particular duties of our state of life, and by asking ourselves how we may have sinned with regard to them.

1. We should make as careful an examination as if we were on our deathbed, considering *in what way we have sinned* in thought, desire, word, deed, or omission. We must recall how often we have committed mortal sins.

"I will meditate on Thy commandments and I will consider Thy ways" (Ps. 118:15).

2. We need not be too anxious about examining ourselves on *venial sins*, as it is not necessary to confess them; but it is better to do so, in order to amend ourselves, and to obtain greater graces.

In our examination of conscience, let us beware, lest, in searching out small sins we may cover the large ones. Let us not imitate the Pharisees, to whom Our Lord said, "Blind guides, who strain out the gnat, but swallow the camel!" (Matt. 23:24).

3. In our examination, we should recall all the *circumstances* that might change the nature of the sins we wish to confess.

For example, if a man has stolen a ciborium from the church, it is not enough for him to confess, "I stole." Stealing sacred vessels, besides being theft, is moreover sacrilege.

4. We should determine exactly *what* we are going to confess, and *how* we are going to express it, avoiding random talk.

When is the examination of conscience careless?—The examination of conscience is careless when we make it too hastily, and thus fail to remember all our sins.

1. Some careless people *rush* into the confessional after one or two minutes' preparation. They seem to make confession a mere stopover between two points of outside interest.

We receive greater graces from confession the better we know ourselves, our sins, our weaknesses, and the greater is our contrition and the stronger our purpose of amendment. These important dispositions cannot be effected by *a hasty examination.*

2. One who *omits confessing* a mortal sin through deliberate carelessness in examination does not make a good confession.

A good rule is to prepare for each confession as if it were to be the last we shall make in this life. The chief reason for our falling into the same sins time and again is our want of earnest preparation for confession, and the resulting lack of conviction of the need of amendment.

When is the examination of conscience too scrupulous?—The examination of conscience is too scrupulous when we make ourselves miserable by minute and prolonged examination, fearing that we may not do it well.

1. Some scrupulous persons spend *a half hour* or more examining themselves with the minutest detail for a weekly confession.

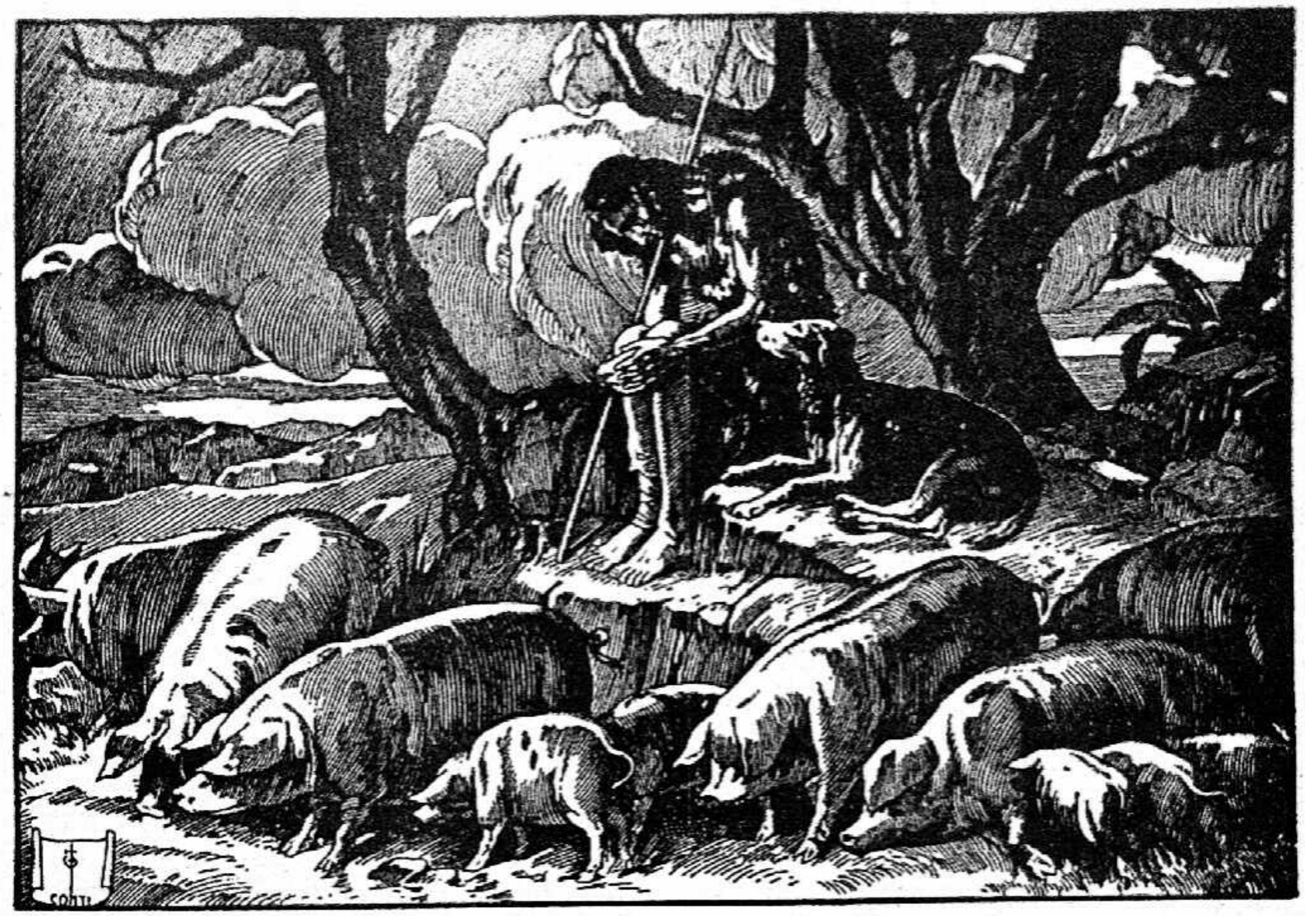
This is too long. A good examination for a weekly confession can be made in five minutes and for a monthly confession in *ten or fifteen minutes*, especially if one has not neglected to make his daily examination of conscience.

2. Our Lord certainly did not institute confession to be a *means of torture,* but a means of forgiveness and relief. In preparing for confession, many give too much time to the examination of conscience, and too little to exciting true sorrow for the sins.

It is unnecessary to count the exact number of our temptations or distractions. It is unnecessary to worry over what we cannot remember. What scrupulous persons need is *good common sense.*

3. A good rule is to examine our conscience *every evening*, spending a few moments looking over the day's actions.

Then when the time comes for confession, we have only to recall the sins our nightly examinations revealed to us. A good examination of conscience is an assurance of a good confession. We can neither confess nor feel sorry for what we do not recall. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).



Our Lord, speaking about the forgiveness of sins, told the parable of the Prodigal Son, who took his inheritance from his father, and wasted it in a far country. But a time came when the Prodigal suffered hardships as a caretaker of swine.

Then, feeling contrition for what he had done, he said to himself: "How many hired men in my father's house have bread in abundance, while I am perishing here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am no longer worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired men. And he arose and went to his father" (Luke 15:17-20).

146. Sorrow for Sin

What is contrition?—Contrition is sincere sorrow for having offended God, and hatred for the sins we have committed, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.

"The Lord is nigh unto them that are contrite of heart" (Ps. 33:19).

God will not forgive us any sin, whether mortal or venial, unless we have *true contrition* for it. Without true contrition a thousand confessions will avail us nothing except to add to our sins. *Unless there is sorrow for sin, there is no forgiveness.*

As examples of true contrition, we have Mary Magdalen, who fell at the feet of Jesus weeping; St. Peter, who wept bitterly for having denied Our Lord; King David, who fasted and prayed, crying, "Have mercy on me, O God . . . a contrite and humble heart Thou wilt not despise."

When is sorrow for sin true contrition?—It is true contrition when it is interior, supernatural, supreme, and universal.

1. Our sorrow is ***interior,*** when it comes from our heart, not merely from our lips.

One day a man bumped into an old woman carrying a basketful of vegetables. Her basket was knocked out of her hand, and the contents spilled on the street, rolling in all directions. The man curtly murmured, "Sorry," and went his way, impatiently saying to himself, "There ought to be a law against old women going out on the streets." Meanwhile, the old woman was left to pick up her vegetables as best she could. This man's sorrow was not interior: it was on his lips alone.

2. Our sorrow is ***supernatural*** when, with the help of God's grace, it arises from

motives which spring from faith, and not merely from natural motives. If we are sorry for our sins because they offend God Who is so good and perfect, or because we fear His punishments, or the loss of heaven, our contrition is supernatural.

A thief was taken to court. He had been caught by reason of a watchdog in the house he had entered. The thief said to himself when he was sentenced to imprisonment: "I am sorry I ever entered that house. Next time I shall be sure and steal only from those houses that do not keep dogs." This man's contrition was not supernatural, but natural. He was sorry only because he was caught and punished. Other natural motives are the loss of health, reputation, or goods.

3. Our sorrow is ***supreme*** when we hate sin above every other evil, and are willing to endure anything rather than offend God in the future by sin.

A child said to the priest: "Father, I think I do not have enough contrition for my sins. When I offend my mother, I cry bitterly, because I love her. But when I confess my sins, I do not cry at all." The priest asked: "Would you commit a sin only to please your mother, whom you love so much?" Quickly the child replied: "Father, no!" This child's contrition is supreme, or sovereign. Sorrow for sin is not judged by the amount of tears we shed, but by the firmness of our will in resolving to make amends and avoid sin because it offends God.

4. Our sorrow is ***universal*** when we are sorry for every mortal sin which we may have had the misfortune to commit. If we have committed five mortal sins, and are contrite for only four, even if we confess all, *not one* is forgiven.

A man is sorry that in attacking his enemy he had killed the wife, the servant, and the son also; but not that he had murdered his enemy himself. He gets no absolution for any one of the murders.

Why should we have contrition for venial sin?—We should have contrition for venial sin, because it is displeasing to God, merits temporal punishment, and may lead to mortal sin.

1. Venial sin is *displeasing* to God, and keeps us out of heaven, however temporarily. If we really love God, we would avoid every sign of sin separating us from Him.

The stains of venial sin may seem very slight to us indeed; but when they are laid against the purity of the Infinite Goodness they become dark blotches. We can realize how God looks upon the slightest of venial sins when we remember how severely He punished His saints, as for instance, Moses, for only a very slight sin of thought.

2. By venial sin we incur *temporal punishment,* which must be made up either here on earth or in the fires of purgatory.

Even the slight loss of temper or discomfort arising from venial sin is not compensated for by any relief or pleasure we may obtain from it. And shall we incur the sufferings of purgatory, and separation from God?

3. Venial sin is a *step* to mortal sin. It causes carelessness with regard to sins, and leads us into sloth with regard to good works. Having cooled in our zeal, we begin to neglect small faults, and soon regard bigger ones with indifference.

And so, being careless about venial sin, we fall into mortal sin "by little and little". No man ever fell suddenly into vice; vice is a habit of sin.

4. Venial sin deprives us of many *graces* by which we might merit more help and love from God. When going to Confession, and if we only have venial sins to confess, we must be sorry for *at least one* of them, or for some sin of our past, which we confess; otherwise the confession is not valid.

Why should we have contrition for mortal sin?—We should have contrition for mortal sin because it is the greatest of all evils, gravely offends God, keeps us out of heaven, and condemns us forever to hell.

Sin is the greatest of evils, because its effects last longest, and it has the most dreadful results. Ill health, poverty, and other material evils last for only a time; at death they will all be ended forever, and we shall have our release from them. But sin? The evils arising from mortal sin, aside from those that hound us in this life, will persecute us unto eternity.

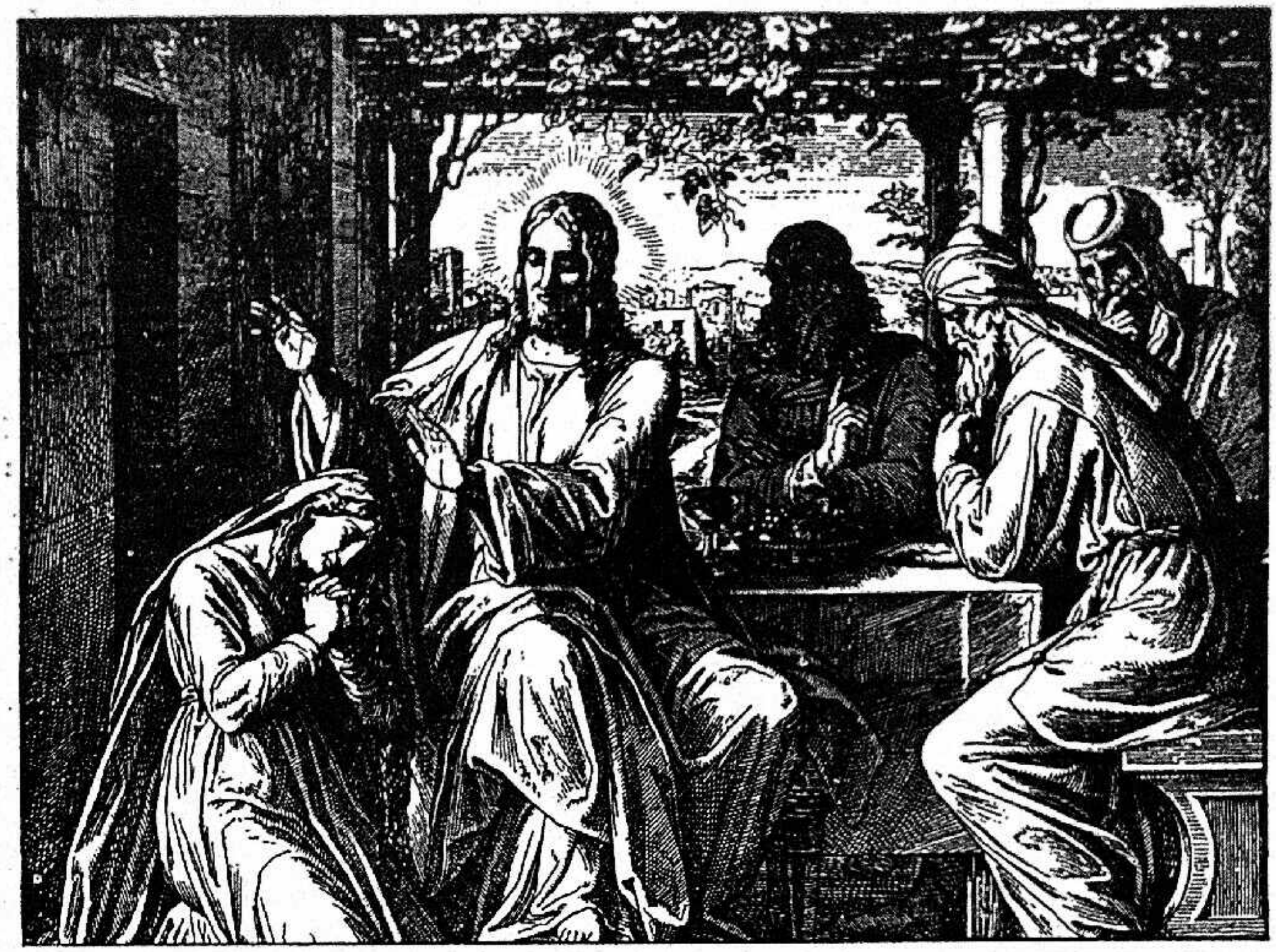
What is an act of contrition?—It is a prayer by which we express to God our sorrow for and detestation of sin.

1. An act of contrition can be *as short as* this: "O my God, I am sorry with all my heart for having offended Thee, because Thou art all good!"

"Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for my soul trusteth in Thee" (Ps. 56:2).

2. An act of contrition is *sufficient to forgive venial sins.* We may therefore go to Holy Communion without confession if we have no mortal sin, after saying such an act.

However, it is better to go to confession at least every two weeks if we are frequent communicants, and have only venial sins. Confession gives special graces not obtained through an act of contrition.



Perfect contrition implies a fervent love of God. We are sorry for our sins because they offend God Who is so good. Mary Magdalen had perfect contrition. Her contrition was so perfect that she never sinned again. She followed Our Lord and was at the foot of the cross when He was crucified. Her perfect contrition and love were greatly rewarded, for He appeared to her on Easter morning. We should all try to imitate Mary Magdalen's contrition, arising from sorrow at offending God.

147. Perfect and Imperfect Contrition

When is our contrition perfect?—Our contrition is perfect when we are sorry for our sins because sin offends God, Whom we love above all things for His own sake.

"'Wherefore I say to thee, her sins, many as they are, shall be forgiven her, because she has loved much. But he to whom little is forgiven, loves little.' And he said to her, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' And they who were at table with him began to say within themselves, 'Who is this man, who even forgives sins?' But he said to the woman, 'Thy faith has saved thee; go in peace'" (Luke 7:47-50).

1. This contrition arises from a pure and perfect love of God. If we have a *perfect love* of God, our contrition for sins will be perfect.

Thus we shall be sorry, not only because we fear punishment or dread the loss of His gifts, but because we offend the good God, to Whom nothing is more evil than sin.

2. It *ought not to be difficult* for us to have a perfect love of God. We generally love our parents not for the food and clothes they give us, but for themselves, because we see their self-sacrifice and unselfishness and other good qualities.

If we can love our parents spontaneously, not for any reward we expect or punishment we wish to avoid, why can we not love God, Who is infinitely more lovable than our parents? If we love God spontaneously, because He is lovable in Himself, our love is perfect.

Is it easy to make an act of perfect contrition sincerely?—It is easy, if we sincerely wish to love God.

1. We can excite ourselves to it by thinking of the Passion, of *how good God is*, how many favors He has granted us, and how ungrateful we have been to Him in return for His goodness.

By thinking of God's gifts, we realize a little the goodness of God and His worthiness to be loved for His own sake. We then feel sorry for having offended our Benefactor by the sins we have committed.

2. An act of perfect contrition *takes away sin immediately*. Our sins however grievous are forgiven before we confess them, although the obligation to confess as soon as we can remains.

Thus, if one makes an act of perfect contrition after having committed a mortal sin, and then dies before being able to go to confession, *he is saved* from hell by the act he made. Let us remember the penitent thief: "And he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise' " (Luke 23:40-43).

However, we may not *receive Holy Communion* after committing a mortal sin, if we merely make an act of perfect contrition; one who has sinned grievously must go to confession before receiving Holy Communion.

The act of perfect contrition means salvation if we die, but without confession it does not give a right to the sacraments.

3. If we happen to be assisting at a deathbed, and no priest is available, we should *help the dying* person make an act of perfect contrition.

The father of a family met with an accident and was at the point of death. The youngest child, who had recently made his first communion, saw that his father would die before the priest could arrive. He therefore took a crucifix from the wall, and holding it before his father's eyes repeated aloud an act of contrition. Tears filled the dying man's eyes. He died before the priest arrived, but his act of contrition washed his soul clean of sin.

4. We should *form the habit* of making an act of perfect contrition as often as possible.

It is only necessary to raise our hearts to God in pure love, and say some such words as: "O my God, I am sorry I ever offended Thee, because Thou art so good, and I love Thee!"

When is our contrition imperfect?—Our contrition is imperfect when we are sorry for our sins because they are hateful in themselves or because we fear God's punishment.

1. Imperfect contrition is called ***attrition.*** The *fear of hell* is a common motive of attrition. It is a good motive, but it is imperfect, because it arises from fear of God's punishments, and not from pure love for Him.

A mother sent her three young sons to take a big jar of honey to their grandmother. On the way the boys stopped to play. They stumbled over the jar, breaking it and spilling the honey. They all began to weep.

The first said, "Mother will surely spank us!" The second cried, "She will be so displeased she will give us no cookies!" And the third wept, "Mother will surely be sad!"

The first two boys had attrition: one had the fear of punishment, and the second had sorrow at the loss of reward. The third child had perfect contrition, for he thought only of the sadness and offense he caused to one he loved.

2. Imperfect contrition, or attrition, is *sufficient* for a worthy reception of the sacrament of Penance; an act of attrition cannot obtain forgiveness of mortal sin without the absolution of a priest.

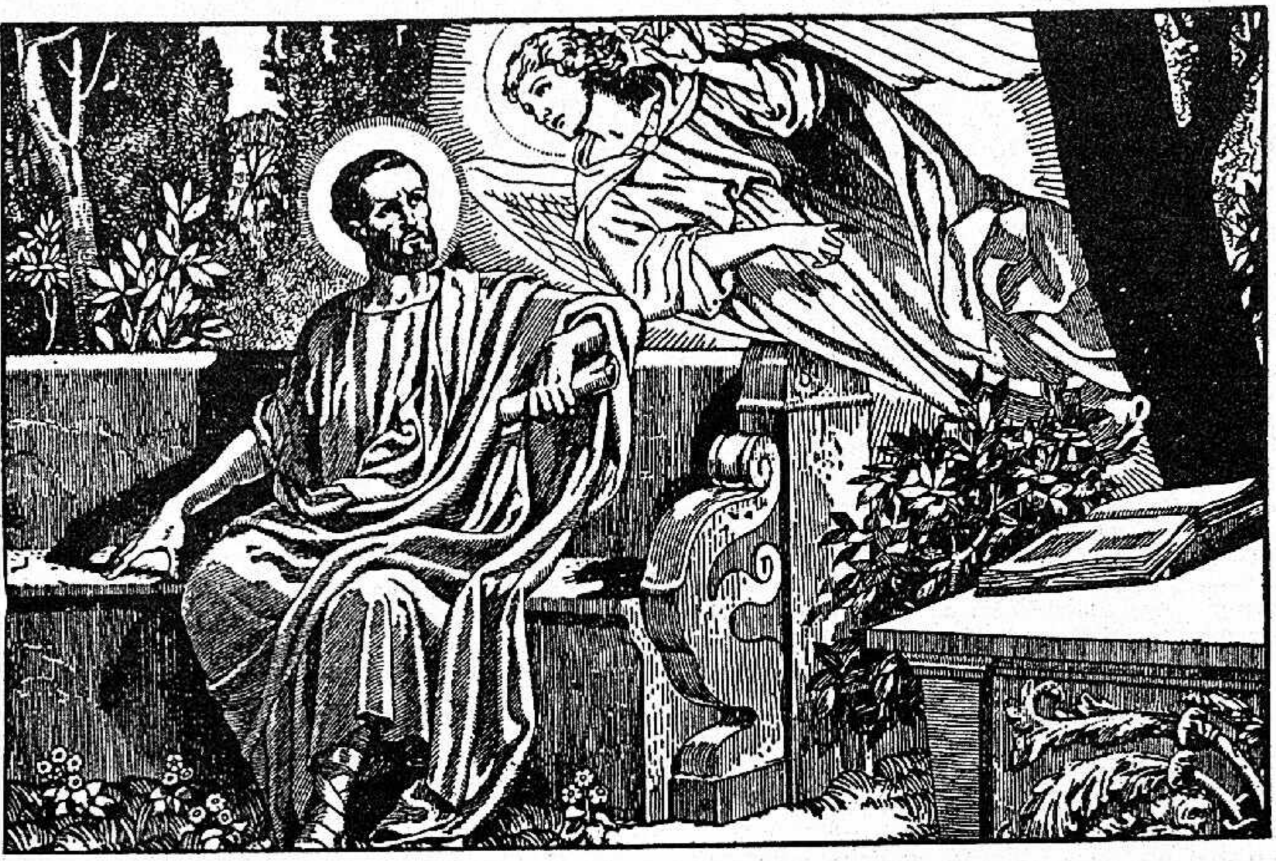
However, even if we feel only attrition for our sins, we can *easily develop* it into perfect contrition by remembering what we should be without God. We should always try to have perfect contrition in the sacrament of Penance, because perfect contrition is more pleasing to God, and because with His help we can always have it.

3. A purely servile fear of God is not sufficient for imperfect contrition. That is one which makes a person avoid sin only because of punishment; so that, if there were no punishment, he would not be sorry, but ready and resolved to sin, regardless of the laws of God.

We call this fear "servile" because it is the fear of slaves, afraid of a hard taskmaster; they would quickly disobey his commands were they not afraid of his whips. Shall we look upon God thus?

To receive the sacrament of Penance worthily, purely servile fear would not be sufficient.

Servile fear does not make the sinner turn away from his sin. The "fear of God" that produces attrition is called *filial fear*. It is a fear of God's punishments that makes the sinner turn away from his sin and return sincerely to God; it is the fear that a good son who has offended his father seriously feels when he begs forgiveness.



St. Augustine in his youth led a bad life. The prayers of his holy mother, St. Monica, led to his conversion. One day he was in the garden when he heard a voice say, Take and read. He took up the Holy Scripture on a nearby table and read.

From that moment his conversion started. He made a resolution to amend his ways. This firm resolution he never broke; he became one of the greatest Saints. If we should be so unhappy as to sin, let us imitate his firm purpose of amendment.

148. Purpose of Amendment

What is the purpose of amendment?—It is the sincere resolution to avoid sin and the near occasions of sin.

"But when the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he roams through dry places in search of a resting place, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house which I left'; and when he has come, he finds the place unoccupied, swept and adorned. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first" (Matt. 12:43-45).

1. This *purpose of amendment* must accompany the act of contrition; it is necessary before sin can be forgiven. By it we determine firmly to amend ourselves. "Thou art made whole; sin no more, lest some worse thing befall thee" (John 5:14).

Two young men had fallen into the vice of drunkenness. Every day they went to the saloon, and with other companions drank till they lost their reason. Being reproved by their parents, they promised to overcome their vice and drink no more.

From that day the first young man avoided passing the saloon, and never entered it again. The second young man thought that so long as he did not enter, passing in front of the saloon was harmless. He passed in front on the first day.

The second day, as he passed, his former companions hailed him, and he entered the saloon, thinking to himself that it was harmless, provided he did not touch wine. After a week of this, he drank a little glass, for old times' sake. It was not long before he fell back into his old vice, while the first young man was cured.

The first young man not only avoided sin, but the near occasions of sin. The second young man had no real purpose of amendment; and so he soon returned to his former ways, and fell back into sin.

2. Our purpose of amendment must have reference to God: it must be *supernatural*. If we decide to amend only because

we should be more popular without bad habits, that is not a supernatural purpose.

In Holy Scripture there was King Antiochus who lamented his sins because worms were eating him up. Today we have criminals, drunkards, evil men, who bewail their wicked deeds because they land in jail or lose their wealth or reputation. For this reason they determine to improve: but not to improve their souls, only their methods, so that they may not be "found out",—as if God had no eyes to see. Even if such persons determine to amend, their purpose has no merit before Almighty God.

3. Even if, after confession, we should fall again into the same sins that we have so often confessed, we *should not despair,* for by so doing we would become worse. If after confession we relapse into the same sins, our purpose of amendment is weak. We must strengthen our will. We should go oftener to confession, examine ourselves carefully, be watchful against temptation.

A young man once came to St. Philip Neri and told him he was the victim of a bad habit. The saint advised him to go to confession immediately after he fell into the same sin. The young man sincerely wished to get rid of the vice, and followed the advice strictly. In a short time he had not only got rid of his vice, but he had formed new virtues.

4. If we have only venial sins, the best way is to choose *the one we commonly commit,* and concentrate our efforts to eradicate it. We should correct ourselves of venial sins one at a time. Thus we can be sure of contrition, and a steady advance in virtue.

What qualities should our purpose of amendment have?—Our purpose of amendment should be firm, efficacious, and universal.

1. Our purpose is ***firm*** when we determine to avoid sin at any cost. Then we do not hesitate back and forth, but with decision cut ourselves off from the bonds which formerly bound us to sin and its occasions.

In one of his military expeditions, Alexander the Great, the conqueror of many lands, arrived in Gordium, Phrygia. In a certain fortress there was what people called the "Gordian knot", so well tied that many had tried to untie it but all miserably failed. It was believed that whoever could untie the Gordian knot would be the conqueror of Asia. When Alexander came, he did not waste time, but drew his sword and cut the knot apart.

2. Our purpose is ***efficacious*** when we resolve to use all means to carry out our determination to amend, as by avoiding the occasions of sin,—persons, places, and things that ordinarily led us into sin in the past, and may do so again in the future. A *good resolution* is like a nail driven fast into the wall, but the resolutions of too many are like a nail badly placed, which falls out as soon as something is hung upon it.

Bad company and improper amusements and reading are such occasions. If we do not avoid them, we are not truly sorry for our sins. *"He who loveth the danger shall perish in it"* (Ecclus. 3:27). People who say they wish to become better, but will not fly away from occasions of sin are like a housewife who industriously sweeps away cobwebs, but refuses to kill the spider that weaves them.

3. Our purpose is ***universal*** when we are determined to keep away from all mortal sins. A wise gardener uproots weeds, and does not merely cut off the top; otherwise they will grow thicker than ever.

St. Sebastian promised to heal the sick proconsul of Rome if he would destroy all the idols. The proconsul destroyed the idols, but did not get well, and complained to the saint about it. The saint told him he had concealed the gold idol inherited from his ancestors, and could not be cured. As soon as he destroyed it, he was healed.

What are the effects of the sacrament of penance, worthily received?—They are:

1. Sanctifying grace.

The sacrament of penance restores sanctifying grace to the soul that has lost it, and increases it in the soul that already possesses it.

2. The forgiveness of sins.

The sacrament of penance remits the guilt of sins. *All sins can be forgiven* in the sacrament of penance. However many and wicked the sins may be, they are all forgiven if the sinner makes a good confession,—even on a deathbed. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all iniquity" (1 John 1:9).

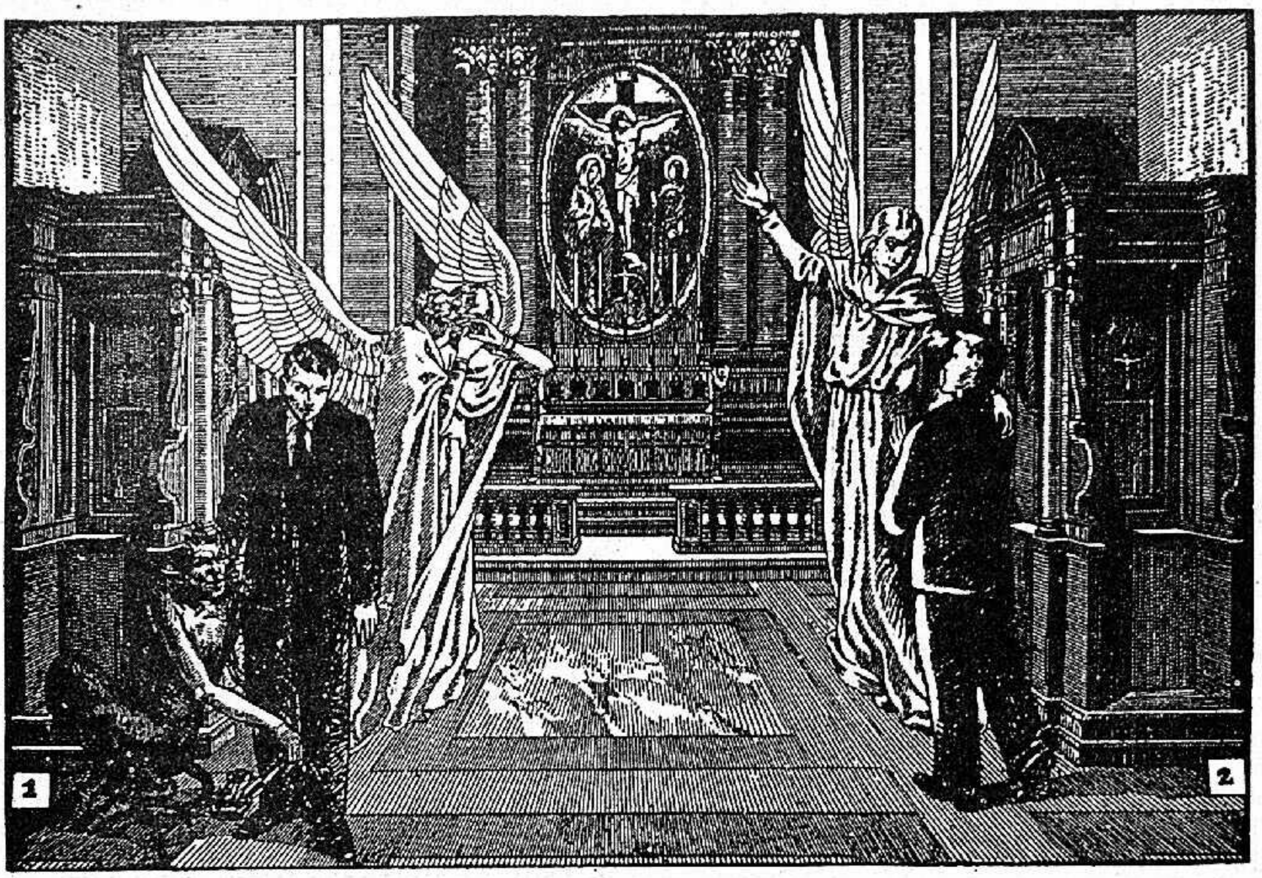
3. The remission of the eternal punishment, if necessary, and also of part, at least, of the temporal punishment, due to sins.

"Unless you repent, you will all perish in the same manner" (Luke 13:5).

4. The help to avoid sin in future.

The sacrament of penance gives the penitent actual graces and a special strength by which he may overcome temptation and lead a good life. Works of penance are not only for the punishment of past sins; they act as a medicine, as a remedy to weaken the power of evil tendencies.

5. The restoration of the merits of our good works, if they were lost by mortal sin.



1. One makes a bad confession who wilfully conceals a mortal sin. Far from being forgiven any of his sins, he thus commits a new mortal sin, sacrilege. If one is ashamed to confess his mortal sins before his ordinary confessor, he is always at liberty to go to another priest, one who does not know him. But by no means must he conceal a mortal sin. "He that hides his sins shall not prosper" (Prov. 28:13).

2. If we make a good confession, our souls are cleansed, and we are restored to sanctifying grace, to the friendship of God. We also receive actual graces which help us in our struggle against evil.

149. Sacramental Confession

What is confession?—Confession is the telling of our sins to an authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

"If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9).

The chief qualities of a good confession are three: it must be humble, sincere, and entire.

When is our confession humble?—Our confession is humble when we accuse ourselves of our sins with a conviction of guilt for having offended God.

Our confession is *humble* when we show by our manner that we are truly sorry, and listen meekly to the priest's correction and advice. One who continually interrupts the priest with, "But you do not know me, Father! I am not like that!" would give the impression that he does not make a humble confession. One who complains that the penance imposed is too heavy for his sins is not humble.

When is our confession sincere?—Our confession is sincere when we tell our sins honestly and frankly.

1. Our confession is *sincere* when we tell our sins just as they are, without excusing or exaggerating them.

One who confesses that he stole because his companions told him to, or that the temptation was too strong, is excusing himself.

2. We should confess exactly as if we were telling our sins *to God Himself;* He knows them perfectly, with all circumstances.

Our confession must be *clear*, so that the confessor may not waste his time asking us questions. We should also be very careful *not to mention by name* anyone in confession.

3. In confession we are to *tell our own sins*, not those of others. Too many make of the confessional a place for gossiping about the faults of others.

The story is told of a woman who went to confession and complained bitterly of the faults of her son. In giving the penance, the priest said, "Say two Hail Marys for your sins and ten rosaries for those sins of your son which you have confessed." He was trying to teach her a needed lesson.

When is our confession entire?—Our confession is entire when we confess at least all our mortal sins, telling their kind, the number of times we have committed each sin, and any circumstances changing their nature.

A story is told of an old farmer who came into the confessional quaking and quivering with nervousness. He said, "Father, I have stolen a rope!" and stopped. Sensing that the confession was not entire, the priest asked, "How long was the rope?" The farmer answered, "About three yards long, Father!" But he was still very nervous, and so the priest asked, "Was there anything else you stole?" The farmer trembled, and finally gasped: "There—there was a—a cow at the end of the rope, Father!"

1. We must tell the exact *nature* or *kind* of the mortal sins we have committed.

For example, it is not enough for one to accuse himself of grievous lying. He should specify what kind of lie he told, whether it was to protect himself or to tell a calumny.

2. We must mention *the circumstances* that change the nature of our sins.

For instance it is not enough to say merely, "I stole five dollars," if they were stolen from a blind beggar, or from the collection plate at church. Ordinarily, taking five dollars from your rich father may be a venial sin. From a beggar, it becomes mortal; from the church it is a sacrilege.

3. We must tell *how many times* we committed a mortal sin. The more often it has been committed, the greater the guilt. If we cannot remember the exact number of times we should tell it as nearly as possible, by telling how long a habit has lasted.

However, we must not waste time unnecessarily in this, but be as simple as possible. Instead of saying: "I was disobedient to my father twice, to my mother three times, and to my teacher five times," a young person should merely say: "I was disobedient ten times."

Is it necessary to confess every sin?—It is necessary to confess every mortal sin which has not yet been confessed and forgiven; it is not necessary to confess our venial sins, but it is better to do so.

1. We must confess ***all our mortal sins.*** God surely can forgive us without Confession; but He has not promised to do so, whereas He very clearly promised to forgive those whom His priests forgive.

God is free to put whatever conditions He wishes on the reception of His gifts. He is certainly within His justice to impose on us the condition of Confession, that we may have our mortal sins forgiven.

2. It is well to confess *venial sins*, though we are not obliged to do so. Many Christians do not commit mortal sin; they would have only venial sins to confess.

Venial sins do not exclude from heaven. *Without confession* they may be forgiven in many ways, such as by prayer, good works, and the frequenting of the sacraments. It is advisable, when confessing only venial sins, to accuse ourselves of some *sin of our past life*, even in general terms, such as: "I also accuse myself of the sins of my past life, especially those I committed against the Fourth Commandment."

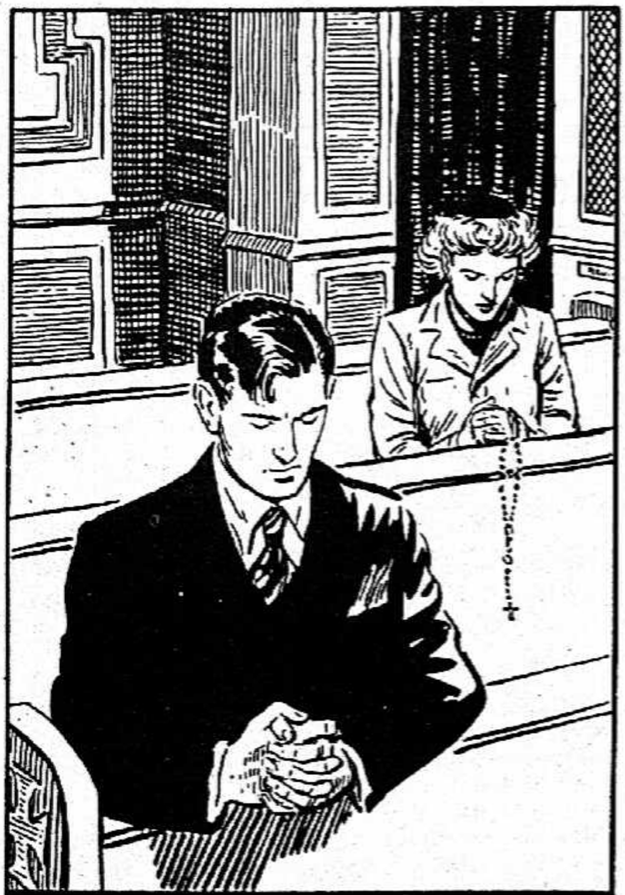
3. The priest *refuses absolution* when he thinks the penitent does not have the necessary dispositions. He may also postpone absolution, if he thinks it best to do so.

The confessor is a judge in the confessional; he must act as a judge, looking not only into the sins being confessed, but also into the purpose of amendment, into the sincerity of contrition of the penitent, and the satisfaction to be imposed.

What must a person do who has knowingly concealed a mortal sin in confession?—A person who has knowingly concealed a mortal sin in confession must confess that he has made a bad confession, tell the sin he has concealed, mention the sacraments he has received since that time, and confess all the other mortal sins he has committed since his last good confession.

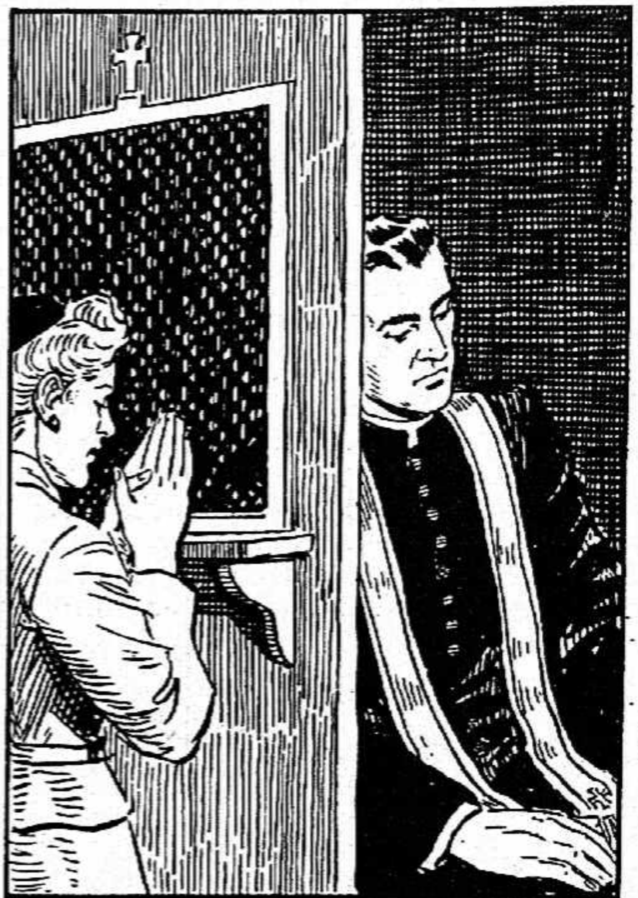
He must confess not only the sin concealed, but *all the sins* confessed in all his unworthy confessions, for none of them was forgiven.

Some conceal mortal sins in confession *out of shame.* They must remember that unless they confess all mortal sins, ***they get no absolution for even one,*** and moreover commit a new sin, sacrilege.



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. Before confessing to the priest, we must first make a very good examination of conscience. Then we should repent of our sins, say an act of contrition, and kneel in the confessional for our confession.



SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION

2. In Confession, we tell our sins to the priest as clearly as possible. We speak in a low voice, and avoid any waste of time in random talk. We must tell all mortal sins; we may also mention whatever venial sins we wish to state.

150. How to Make a Good Confession

How should we prepare ourselves for a good confession?—We should prepare ourselves for a good confession by taking sufficient time not only to examine our conscience, but especially to excite in our hearts sincere sorrow for our sins, and a firm purpose not to commit them again.

When hearing confession, the priest uses a purple stole. The color purple signifies sorrow and penance. In former days priests used the stole continually as part of their habit, but today they use it only when on duty; the Pope alone uses the stole continually. It is the badge of the priesthood.

1. After we have made a good examination of conscience and excited ourselves to true repentance, we should say an *act of contrition.* The act of contrition should *precede the confession.* We should make it after the examination of conscience, before going into the confessional. The priest cannot pardon us if we are not repentant.

An act of contrition made *any time during the day* on which we go to confession is sufficient. We should *renew* the act of contrition at the moment that the priest is giving us absolution after our confession.

2. We then approach the confessional to *await our turn.* We should never crowd and fight to get first place. Some persons are so eager to be first that they even go up near the one actually confessing. This is a serious fault, especially if by so doing the person hears the confession going on.

Roger Brooke Taney was one day awaiting his turn to confess, in line with some negro workmen. He was then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, a position second only in dignity to that of the President. Seeing him, the priest came out and said, "Come in next, Mr. Taney: the time of the Chief Justice is too precious to spend waiting." But the Chief Justice replied, "Not Chief Justice here, Father, only a prisoner at the bar." And he kept his place in line, awaiting his turn.

3. When our turn comes, we *kneel in the confessional* and wait till the priest leans towards the opening.

How should we confess our sins to the priest?—We should confess our sins in this manner:

1. Making the sign of the cross, we say to the priest: *"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned"*; and then we tell how long it has been since our last confession.

2. We then *state our sins* as clearly and briefly as possible, telling all mortal sins, including those that may have been forgotten in previous confessions, with the nature and number of each; we may also confess any venial sins we wish to mention. We must not waste time at any random talk.

If we cannot remember the exact number of our mortal sins, we should tell the number as nearly as possible, or say how often we have committed the sins in a day, a week, a month, or a year. When we have committed no mortal sin since our last confession, we should confess our venial sins, or some sin told in a previous confession, for which we are again sorry, in order that the priest may give us absolution.

3. Having finished, we say: "For these and all the sins of my past life I am truly sorry, especially for . . ."; and then it is well to tell one or several of the sins which we have previously confessed, and for which we are particularly sorry.

What should we do after confessing our sins?—After confessing our sins, we should answer truthfully any question the priest asks, seek advice if we feel that we need any, listen carefully to the spiritual instruction and counsel of the priest, and accept the penance he gives us.

If we do not understand the penance, we must ask the priest to repeat it. If we cannot perform that particular penance, we should state our reasons to the priest, and have him change it. We should wait and listen attentively all the time that the priest gives advice and imposes penance.

1. When the priest is giving us absolution, we should say from our heart the *act of contrition* in a tone to be heard by him, and make the sign of the cross.

The words of absolution are said in Latin: *"I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."* We must not leave the confessional until the priest gives some sign, as by saying, "God bless you," or "go in peace." It is best to wait till he has closed the little window.

2. After leaving the confessional, we should return *thanks* to God for the sacrament we have received, beg Our Lord to supply for the imperfections of our confession, and promptly and devoutly perform our penance.

What are we to do if without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin?—If without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin, we may receive Holy Communion, because we have made a good confession and the sin is forgiven; but we must tell the sin in confession if it again comes to our mind.

A *doubtful sin* is one of which we are not sure whether it is a sin or not a sin. We are not obliged to confess a doubtful sin, but it is better to do so. The confessor can then advise us and we shall have greater peace of mind.

What is a general confession?—A general confession is a repetition of all previous confessions, or at least of some of them.

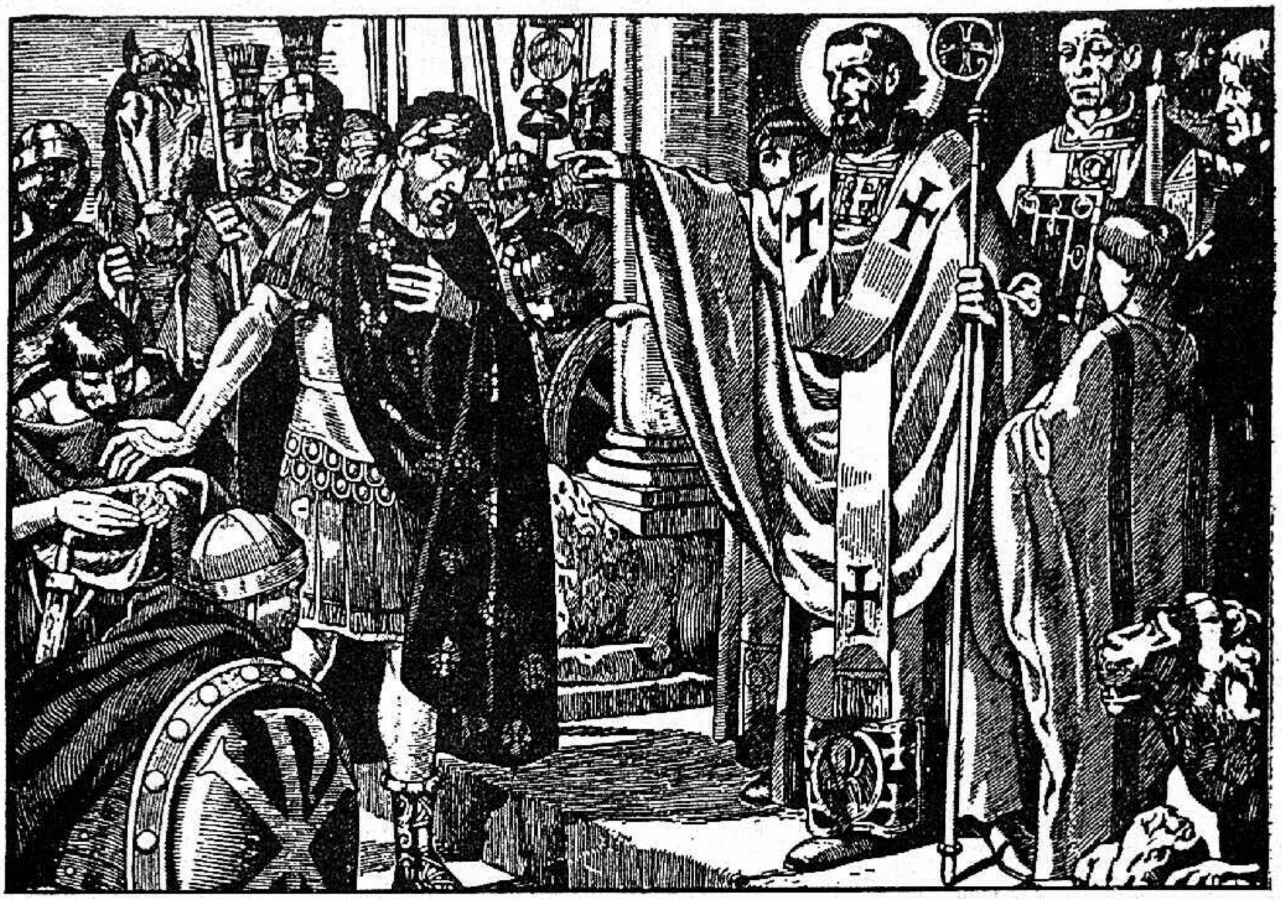
Housewives sweep and dust the house every day; nevertheless they also give it a thorough general cleaning once or twice a year. A general confession is the equivalent of this general housecleaning.

1. It is a good practice to make a *general confession* of the whole year once a year, especially after a retreat or mission. These are called confessions of devotion.

Scrupulous persons, however, who only torture themselves, should avoid general confessions. Even if mortal sins are omitted purposely in a general confession of devotion, it is worthy, provided those sins have previously been confessed and absolved.

2. It is usual to make a general confession of our whole life when we are about to *change our state of life,* as before marriage or before entering the priesthood or a religious order. A general confession is necessary when one has been making unworthy confessions.

A general confession is to be recommended as conducive to greater self-knowledge, to more genuine humility, and increased peace of mind.



Theodosius the Great, Roman Emperor, although a just ruler, once ordered the massacre of about 7000 people of Thessalonica in revenge for a tumult that they had caused in the year 390. St. Ambrose, then Archbishop of Milan, thereupon forbade the emperor's entrance into the church. Theodosius acknowledged his sin, and humbly stated that King David had likewise sinned. St. Ambrose rebuked him, answering that the emperor must then imitate David in his penance. Theodosius made reparation to the Thessalonians and did an eight-months' severe canonical penance.

151. Satisfaction for Sin

Why does the priest give us a penance after confession?—The priest give us a penance after confession, that we may make some atonement to God for our sins, receive help to avoid them in the future, and make some satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to them.

1. The penance is *satisfaction* for sin, some penitential work imposed by the priest as a reparation to God for the offense offered to Him by sin.

In the early days of the Church, public or *canonical penance* was imposed for public sins. One who apostatized for fear had to do penance for seven years, during which time he was excluded from Holy Communion, and was required to fast on certain days.

2. Justice requires that an injury done to another should be *repaired*. One who steals must restore the stolen property. God forgave Adam's sin, but his penance lasted his whole life. In the same way our guilt is forgiven in confession, but we must make satisfaction for our sins. Our eternal punishment is forgiven, but not our temporal punishment. *Temporal punishment* is the punishment or penance that we have to suffer for our sins either here on earth or in Purgatory.

One who breaks the civil law is not let off even if he is sorry. He is given a *penalty* imposed by the judge. How much more should the priest, the spiritual judge, impose a penalty or penance to satisfy for the offense offered to God when we commit sin!

3. Today the most common form of satisfaction is the *saying of certain prayers* im-

posed. If the sin calls for material reparation, restoration of property or a public apology is also sometimes imposed.

One should not complain if the penance given by the confessor is more than other confessors usually impose. One should instead thank God for the opportunity to make some satisfaction here on earth, thus shortening his purgatory.

4. If the penance consists of prayers, we should say it if possible as soon as we leave the confessional. It is *wrong to put off* the performance of a penance too long. One who intentionally omits the penance commits sin, although the sins that were forgiven do not return. To omit a penance for venial sins would be a venial sin; a serious penance for mortal sins, would be grievous.

If we cannot perform the penance imposed, we may request our confessor to change it. We may not on our own authority substitute another penance for the one imposed.

What kinds of punishment are due to sin?—Two kinds of punishment are due to sin: the eternal punishment of hell, due to unforgiven mortal sins, and temporal punishment, lasting only for a time, due to venial sins, and also to mortal sins after they have been forgiven.

1. Even if Our Lord by His death fully *atoned* for all our sins, we need to do penance for them. He made salvation available, on condition that we do our part.

In a similar way, a physician prescribes medicine. If one refuses it, he is not cured.

2. If there were no need of penance, the most hardened sinners would receive *the same treatment* as the most saintly men, a condition impossible to the justice of God. Christ Himself wills that as we are to share in His glory, we must first share in His sufferings.

"Heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ: yet so, if we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him" (Rom. 8:17).

3. The *punishment* for sin prescribed by God is clear:

(a) For mortal sin, *eternal punishment in hell.* This punishment we can escape by the sacrament of Penance, or, at the moment of death, if we are not able to receive the sacrament of Penance, by an act of perfect contrition.

(b) For mortal sins which have been forgiven, and venial sin not completely atoned for, *temporal punishment.*

4. The sacrament of Penance, worthily received, *always takes away* all eternal punishment; but it does not always take away all temporal punishment.

Why does God require temporal punishment for sin?—God requires temporal punishment for sin to satisfy His justice, to teach us the great evil of sin, and to warn us not to sin again.

1. Temporal punishment is due even forgiven sins, because human contrition is often imperfect. This temporal punishment is *an atonement* made to divine sanctity and justice. After confession, our contrition generally requires more satisfaction than the few prayers given as penance.

"Nathan said to David: 'The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die; nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die'" (2 Kings 12).

2. Temporal punishment, as the word implies, *lasts for only a time.* It has a definite end. Holy Scripture furnishes us many examples of temporal punishment having been imposed by God.

Mary, the sister of Moses, was pardoned the sin she committed by murmuring against her brother. Nevertheless, God inflicted on her the temporal penalty of leprosy, and of seven days' separation from the people (Num. 12).

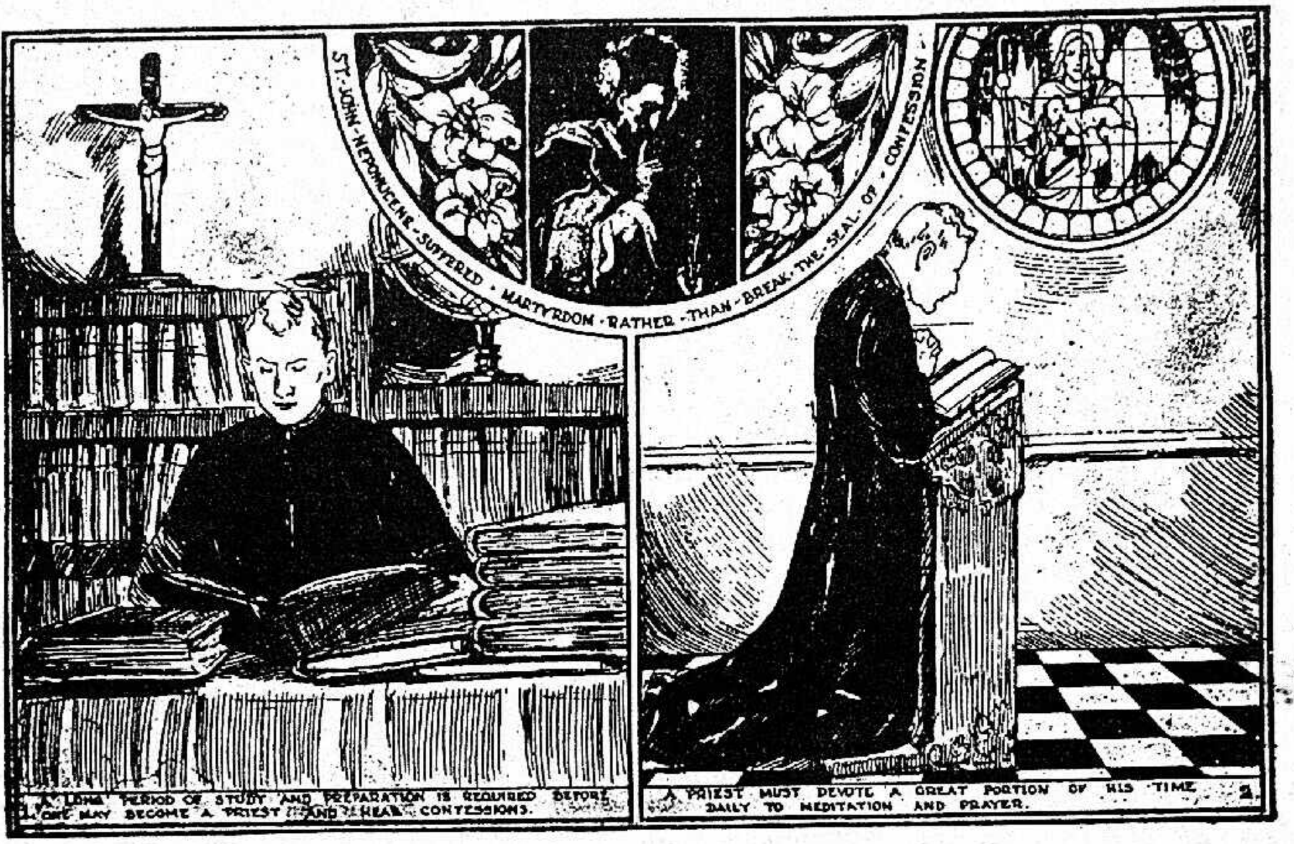
3. We pay the *debt* of our temporal punishment either in this life or in purgatory.

What are the chief means of satisfying the debt of our temporal punishment, besides the penance imposed after confession?—They are: prayer, attending Mass, fasting, alms-giving, the works of mercy, the patient endurance of sufferings, and indulgences.

"But Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, I give one-half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold'" (Luke 19:8-9).

Devout persons will not be satisfied with doing the penance imposed by the priest. They will do *voluntary work* of charity and mortification, in atonement; they will, besides, bear patiently all ills sent by God.

The penance we perform, and the sufferings we bear patiently, not only reduce the temporal punishment due our sins, but also contribute to the increase of our eternal happiness. This is what we call *gaining merits* for heaven.


ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE SUFFERED MARTYRDOM RATHER THAN BREAK THE SEAL OF CONFESSION.
1. A LONG PERIOD OF STUDY AND PREPARATION IS REQUIRED BEFORE ONE MAY BECOME A PRIEST AND HEAR CONFESSIONS.
A PRIEST MUST DEVOTE A GREAT PORTION OF HIS TIME DAILY TO MEDITATION AND PRAYER. 2.

1. Before a man is ordained priest and permitted to hear confessions, he must go through a long period of careful study and preparation. The present rule is to have a four-year preparatory course after the intermediate course, three or at least two years of Philosophy, and four years of Theology, Canon Law, Ecclesiastical History, and Sacred Scripture. This long and detailed preparation would usually not attract a low class of men.

2. After one is ordained priest, he is continually reminded of his duties not only by his superiors, but by his daily meditation and prayer. Every priest is obliged to say the Breviary every day. These spiritual duties bring down the grace of God on the priest, and serve to strengthen him to be faithful to his sacred duties, one of the most important being to keep the seal of the confession, the sacramental secret.

152. The Seal of Confession

What is the "seal of confession"?—It is the most solemn obligation of a priest to keep secret what has been revealed to him in confession.

1. The priest may not break this seal of confession even to save his own life, or to avert a great calamity. He must act as if he *had not heard anything* in confession. This is why a sense of shame or fear of telling our sins should never lead us to conceal mortal sins in confession.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century, Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, ordered St. John Nepomucene to be drowned in the river Moldau. The king had tried to make the Saint reveal to him what the queen had said in confession, and the saint had firmly refused, in spite of inducements and threats. Hundreds of years after, during the process of canonization, the saint's *tongue* was found *incorrupt*, and looked like a living tongue.

2. The seal of confession must be observed even in a *court of justice*, for the divine law is higher than human law.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, a Jesuit priest of New York, Father Kohlman, was called into court to testify. A couple were on trial for having received stolen goods. Father Kohlman was supposed to have knowledge of the matter through the confessional, for he had restored the stolen goods to the rightful owner. At court, the priest refused to testify, and was thereupon tried for contempt of court. However, he was not punished, and soon after a New York law was passed exempting priests from revealing in court any knowledge obtained in confession.

Such a law, nevertheless, is far from universal, and the position of a priest who refuses to reveal confessional matter in a court of law is not secure.

3. It would be a *mortal sin* for a priest to divulge even the venial sin of a person which he knew through confession. The penalty for violating the seal of confession is excommunication reserved to the Pope, besides severe ecclesiastical penalties. From time to time we hear of priests who apostatize, but never has anyone fallen so low as to break the seal of confession.

This incident happened in France during medieval times. The chaplain of a castle one night heard a knock at his door, and opening it saw a man, who said that he wished to go to confession. The chaplain heard the confession during which the man revealed that that same night he was to lead an assault against the castle, having been chosen to execute a plot. The chaplain tried to dissuade him, but in vain. Absolution having been denied him, the man departed.

The chaplain passed the night in an agony of dread. However, he remained at the castle, and told no one of what he had heard in the confessional, but prepared himself for death. At dawn he heard a knock, and admitted the man of the night before. The man said: "I wished to be convinced that priests really observe the seal of the confessional, for I am a great sinner. All night I watched to see whether you would inform others, or leave the castle to save yourself. Now I no longer doubt the secrecy of the confessional, and I want to confess all my wicked deeds."

4. The penitent, however, may give the priest *permission to make use* of what he has revealed in confession. In that case the priest may do so, although he is advised to be most careful, in order to prevent unjust accusation concerning the secrecy of the confessional.

Enemies of the Church have constantly tried to attack the seal of confession, to break this rule of the Church. So far, by the grace of God Who watches over His Church, these enemies have failed.

Are penitents bound by the seal of confession?—Penitents are in no way bound by the seal of confession; but they are advised to refrain from talking about what the priest tells them in the confessional.

1. Penitents should *avoid speaking* about the advice given, the penance, etc.

One reason for this is that if we misunderstand or misrepresent what the priest told us, he has no way of defending himself. Besides, each penitent is *different* from the others. Advice or penance given by a confessor to one may not be good for another; just as a doctor prescribes different medicines for his patients.

2. *If we overhear something being told in the confessional, we are strictly* ***bound to secrecy.***

Are we free to choose our confessor?—Yes, we are absolutely free to choose the confessor we like.

1. It is advisable to have *a regular confessor.* In this way he becomes well acquainted with our character and state of conscience. He is thus enabled to direct us better, to give us more effective spiritual advice and instruction.

A confessor is like a physician. If a sick man consults a different physician every week and follows the directions of none, he cannot expect much improvement in health. Similarly, a penitent who moves from one confessor to another can hardly get the advice he needs.

2. We should choose a skilled confessor, and *follow his directions* faithfully. However, for the peace of our conscience, we should not hesitate to change confessors. We should not become so attached to one as to be unable to confess to another priest.

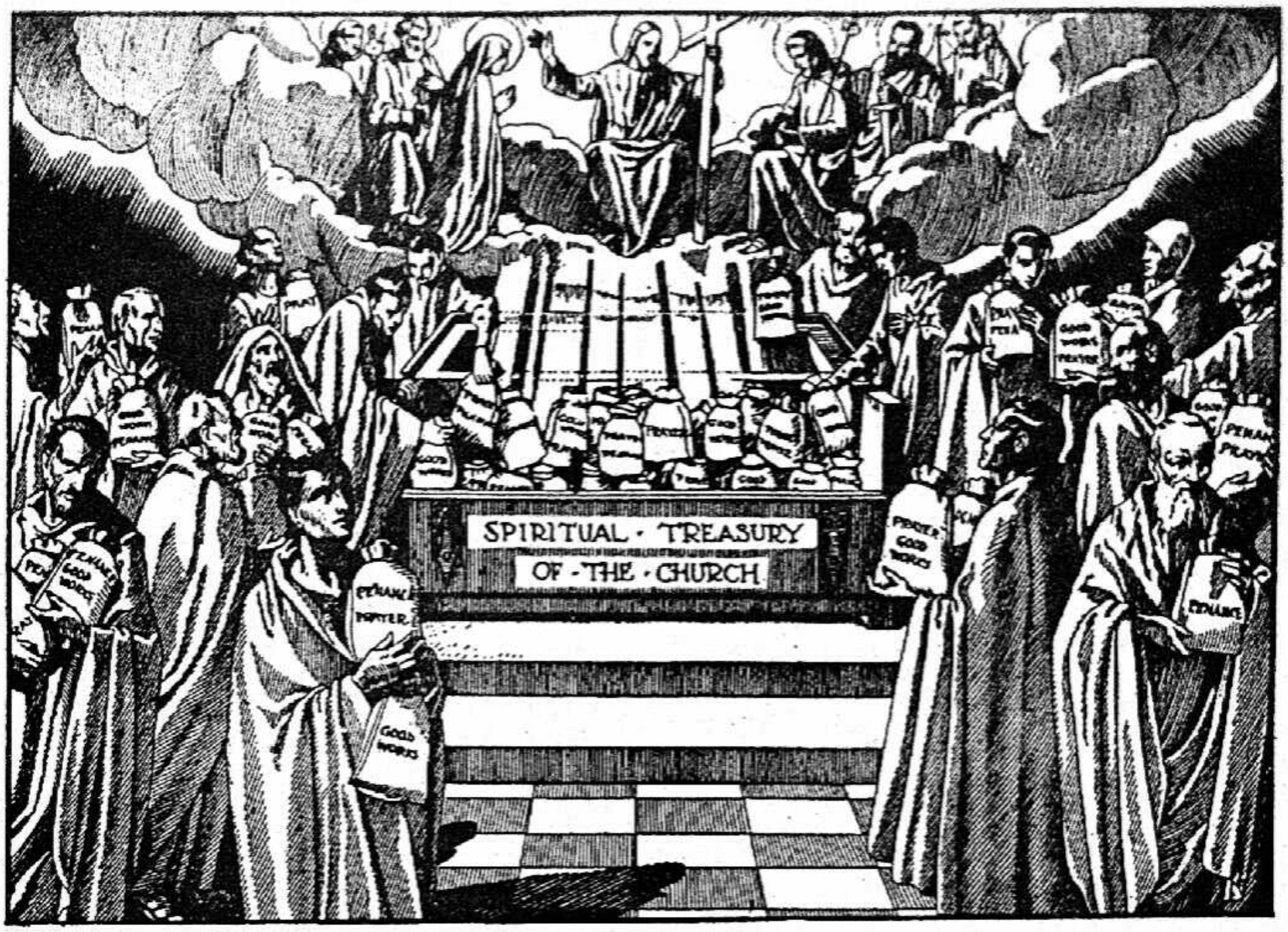
If we change confessors, we should never without necessity mention to the new one what our old confessors advised us. It might work an injustice to the previous confessor, who cannot defend himself.

3. Some conceal mortal sins in confession out of a *sense of shame* before their ordinary confessor. Such persons should go and confess to another priest.

They should also remember that the priest, who represents Christ Himself, is bound by the seal of confession never to reveal anything told him in the confessional.

4. Those who are ashamed to confess to any priest must remember that one day they will have their *sins revealed,* to their eternal confusion, before all mankind. "I will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms" (Nahum 3:5). Is it not better to reveal our sins now to only one man, who need not know the penitent, and is furthermore bound by the sacramental secret? Is it not better to confess them now to the priest, than burn in hell for all eternity?

Moreover, the priest is ready to receive penitents kindly. It is a joy of the priesthood to have penitents make sincere confessions, and show a firm determination to be converted from sin. God Himself said, "There will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine just who have no need of repentance" (Luke 15:7).



The Church has a spiritual treasury made up of the infinite merits of Our Lord, and the superabundant merits of the Blessed Mother and the Saints. The passion and death of Our Lord and the penances and sufferings of the Blessed Mother who did not need to do penance, and of the Saints, have created this spiritual treasury, which Christ left for the use of the Communion of Saints. In this way, a penitent who gains an indulgence receives from his Mother the Church some of the wealth gathered in the spiritual treasury from the merits of Our Lord, Mary, and the Saints.

153. Indulgences

What is an indulgence?—An indulgence is the remission granted by the Church of the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven.

1. Our Lord gave the Apostles and their successors the power to *deliver* men from every obstacle that might separate them from heaven. Thus He said to St. Peter:

"Whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19). To the Apostles assembled together He later made the same solemn declaration.

2. Since Christ gave the Apostles the power and right to forgive sins, free men from hell, and lead them to heaven, He certainly also gave them the *lesser power* to free sinners from the temporal punishment due to sin, and save them from purgatory.

A civil ruler who has the right to pardon criminals is empowered to choose *in what manner* he will grant the pardon. The Church exercises a similar right and power in granting indulgences.

3. An indulgence is *not a permission or license to sin.* ***One who is not in the state of grace cannot gain an indulgence.*** It is simply a forgiveness or release from temporal punishment, but the guilt must *previously* have been taken away by confession.

An indulgence relates to temporal punishment due to sins of the *past,* and cannot be gained for future sins.

How does the Church by means of indulgences remit the temporal punishment

due to sin?—The Church by means of indulgences remits the temporal punishment due to sin by applying to us from her spiritual treasury part of the infinite satisfaction of Jesus Christ and of the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints.

1. In the Church there is a *spiritual treasury* made up of the superabundant merits of Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and the Saints. The merits of the passion and death of Our Lord are infinite, for He is God. All these He left to His Church.

The superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints is that which they gained during their lifetime, but did not need, and which the Church applies to their fellow-members of the communion of saints (*see page* 148).

2. When the Church grants an indulgence, it does *not really cancel any expiation* due to God. It only supplies for our deficiencies by drawing on the spiritual treasury of the Church.

A mother had many sons and daughters. Some of them acquired great riches, and upon dying, bequeathed their possessions to their mother, to be used as she pleased. Now the mother had younger children who needed support and education. Once in a while therefore the mother withdrew money from the bank, where she had deposited the riches left her, and used this money for her other children.

3. Divine justice requires an exact reparation for all sins we have committed. Usually the small penance of a few prayers imposed by the confessor is not sufficient to make satisfaction for our sins, which have outraged the holiness of God.

Besides, we are often careless, and have only imperfect contrition for our sins. Therefore, even after our sins are forgiven, there usually remains some temporal punishment which we have to suffer either here or in purgatory. If we make use of indulgences, we draw upon the spiritual treasury of the Church, and thus balance our account with God.

Has the Church always exercised its right to grant indulgences to the faithful?—The Church has always exercised its right to grant indulgences.

1. The *Apostles* granted indulgences.

St. Paul writes of a Corinthian who had shown such signs of true repentance that his penance had been remitted. "Whom you pardon anything, I also pardon. Indeed, what I have forgiven—if I have forgiven anything—I have done for your sakes, in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. 2:10).

2. During the time of *the great persecutions,* the confessors and martyrs remained constant and were cast into prison, and many were put to death. Others denied their faith to escape persecution; on these the Church imposed severe penances.

However, if the confessors and martyrs interceded in behalf of the apostates, their time of penance was shortened by the Bishop. In other words, an "indulgence" was granted to them by the proper authority, in view of the superabundant merits of those who interceded for them.

3. As the centuries passed, the Church *moderated* its severe penances. There was danger that, if penances continued to be very severe, many would be unable to fulfill them. In order, therefore, to save as many souls as possible, the Church made the penances lighter. Public penances ceased to be imposed; the penitent was permitted to make atonement by means of alms-deeds, crusades, or pilgrimages.

Hence the wider use of indulgences came about; and they were granted for works comparatively easy of accomplishment.

4. More and more *indulgences* came to be granted, as today they are granted, for reciting certain prayers, for visiting certain holy places, for fasting and almsgiving, for using certain sacred objects.

Thus, when the Holy Land came into the power of the Turks, and pilgrimages could no longer be made to Jerusalem, Pope Boniface VIII granted a plenary indulgence to all who, during the year 1300, should for 15 successive days visit the basilica of the Apostles in Rome. This was the origin of the Jubilee indulgence.

What are some of the advantages of indulgences?—Some of the advantages are:

1. They *cancel or lessen* our temporal punishment.

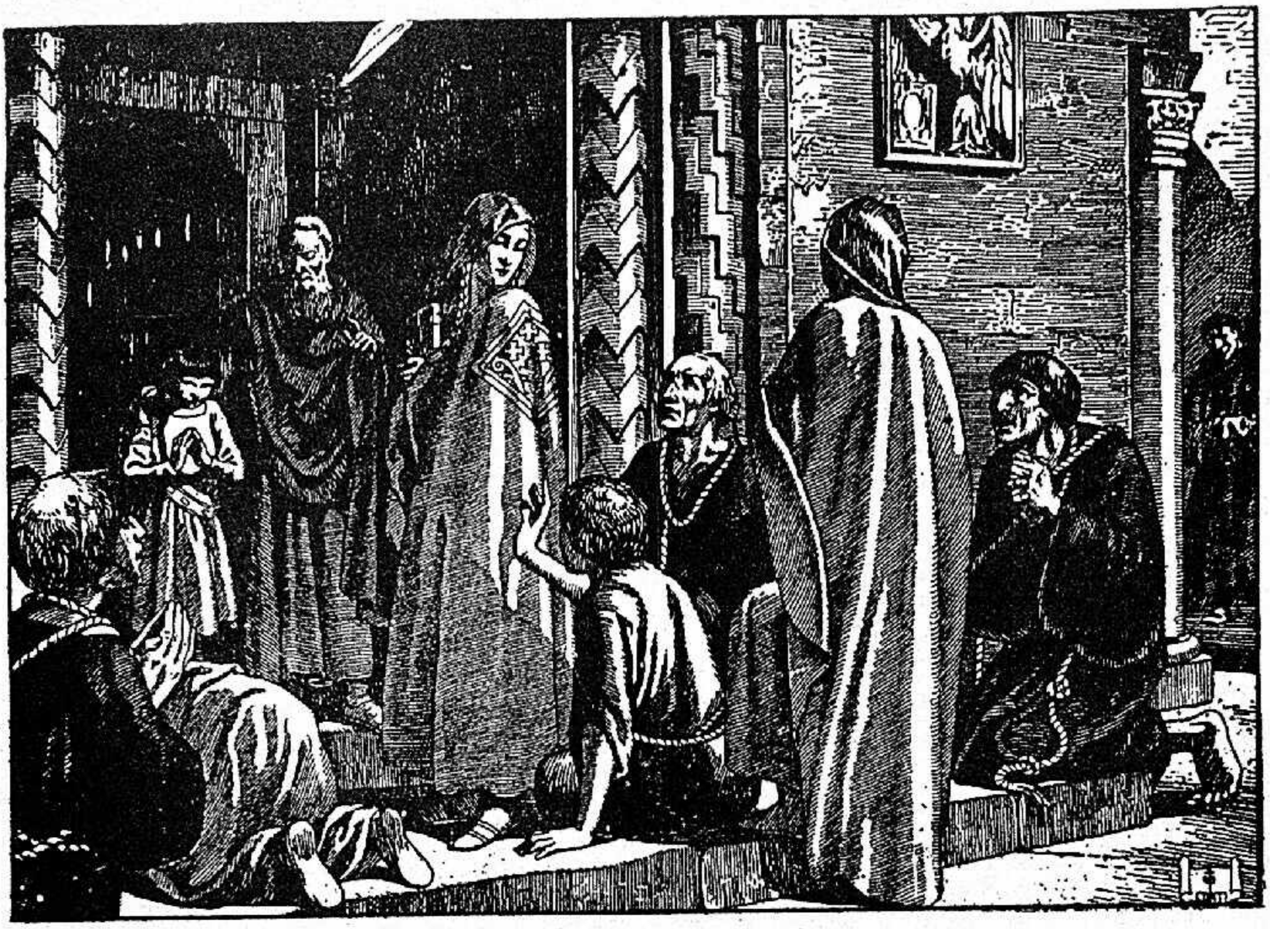
Thus those who neglect the practice of gaining indulgences may be likened to a traveler who prefers a long and difficult road although a short and pleasant one is offered to him.

2. They *console* us in our fear of God's judgment for our past sins, and give us hope for the future.

When we sin, they encourage us to make our peace with God, for *a state of grace is necessary* before we can gain any indulgence.

3. They *encourage* us to go frequently to the sacraments, and to do good works.

They enable us to practice charity towards the holy souls in Purgatory.



In the early Church, the canonical penances were severe. Grave sins, such as apostasy, were punished with a penance of seven years. During all this time the penitent was excluded from the company of the faithful. He knelt at the entrance of the church, asking for the prayers of those that entered. He heard only the first part of the Mass, and was not permitted to receive Holy Communion. On fixed days during the period of his penance, he was obliged to fast on bread and water. But if those faithful interceded, the penitent was granted an indulgence; his penance was shortened.

154. Grant of Indulgences

What is a plenary indulgence? – A plenary indulgence is the remission of all the temporal punishment due to our sins.

1. One who dies immediately after gaining a plenary indulgence goes *straight to heaven*, without having to pass through purgatory.

The good thief was granted by Our Lord a plenary indulgence, because of his perfect contrition of heart. To the other thief he said that they were receiving what their deeds deserved. "And he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise'" (John 23:42-43).

2. To gain a plenary indulgence, one must be entirely *free from all sin*, both mortal and venial, and all affection for it.

If we do not fulfill this condition, even if we do some good work to which a plenary indulgence is attached, we may only gain a partial benefit, according to our dispositions.

3. A plenary indulgence cannot be gained *more than once* on the same day, unless the contrary is stated explicitly.

What is a partial indulgence?—A partial indulgence is the remission of part of the temporal punishment due to our sins.

Indulgences are generally greater or less in proportion to the works prescribed; for some easy work, a small indulgence is granted, and for more difficult work, a greater indulgence.

1. A partial indulgence is *reckoned*, like the public penitential discipline of old, in days, quarantines, and years.

The precise meaning of these periods of time has not been clearly defined; their use has come to us from the former canonical penances of the Church. When a penitent had to do penance for a *quarantine*, he had to fast forty days on bread and water.

2. The indulgence attached must *not be taken to mean* a certain length of time in purgatory. When an indulgence of 300 days is granted, it does not mean to free a soul from 300 days' suffering in purgatory.

It simply implies that as much temporal punishment may be remitted as would have been remitted in the primitive Church by a *canonical penance* of 300 days, according to the rules of that time.

3. As no one knows how much the penances of old satisfied God's justice, so we cannot now know *how much* temporal punishment is remitted by the corresponding partial indulgence. We only know that the more indulgences we may be able to earn, the less will be our punishment in purgatory. We cannot even be sure we have gained the indulgences, since efficacy depends on our good dispositions.

What are the most important plenary indulgences?—The most important plenary indulgences are: the jubilee indulgence, and those of the Portiuncula, of the papal benediction, and for the hour of death.

1. The *jubilee indulgence* is granted every Jubilee, or Holy Year. The regular jubilee occurs every twenty-five years. Occasionally an extra jubilee is proclaimed by the Pope under special circumstances, as his accession to the papal throne, an important anniversary, etc. In a jubilee year all other indulgences for the living are suspended except that of the Angelus and that for the hour of death.

The ancient Jews kept every fiftieth year as a year of rejoicing; this custom was introduced into the Church. In this year, all their transgressions were pardoned, property that had been stolen was restored, etc.

2. The Portiuncula is a plenary indulgence that may be gained *for the dead* as often as one visits certain specified churches (originally only the Franciscan chapel of Portiuncula, near Assisi) on definitely stated dates.

3. A plenary indulgence is granted to those who receive the *papal benediction or blessing* after confession, communion, and prayer for the Pope's intentions.

The papal benediction is usually given at the end of missions or retreats, or at the hour of death.

4. *Personal indulgences* are granted to particular persons, especially at the hour of death.

An example of this personal indulgence is the papal blessing, certificate of which is sent from the Vatican to the person concerned. This grants a plenary indulgence to the particular person at the hour of death if he pronounces the Name of Jesus, or at least have it in his mind and heart.

Who has authority to grant indulgences?—The Pope alone has authority to grant plenary indulgences and indulgences for the whole Church; archbishops and bishops can grant partial indulgences for their own dioceses.

Priests with special faculties from the Pope may attach indulgences to objects they bless. All objects blessed by the Holy Father have the Apostolic indulgences attached to them.

1. An indulgence is granted for the living or for the dead. An indulgence for the living means for the person who performs the good work. We *cannot* gain an indulgence for *another living person*.

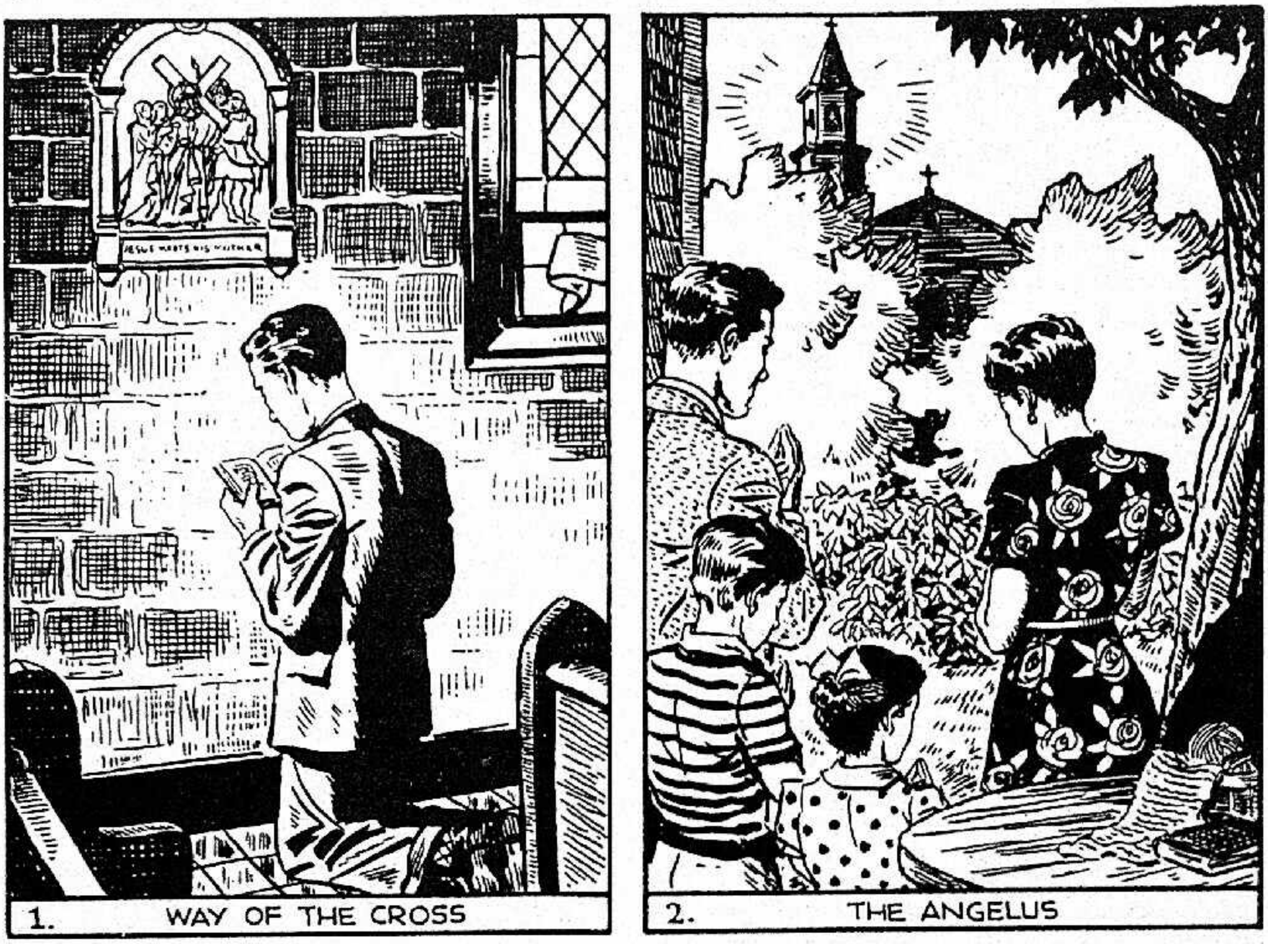
2. The Holy See alone can grant indulgences applicable *to the dead*. All papal indulgences can be applied to the souls in purgatory, unless otherwise stated.

Most indulgences are today applicable to the dead. Persons who have made the Heroic Act can apply every indulgence to the poor souls (*see page* 159).

How can the Church grant indulgences for the dead?—The Church can grant such indulgences, as an offering to God by way of suffrage, as an intercessory prayer for the departed souls.

As we cannot know how much temporal punishment is remitted by any indulgence, still less can we know what value the indulgences we gain have, when applied to the *souls in purgatory*.

It is wrong, for instance, to say that we have freed a particular soul from purgatory by the recital of a certain prayer with a plenary indulgence. The efficacy of such indulgences depends on God's response to the intercession offered. But can we doubt that He will listen to the entreaty of His Church, with the infinite Treasury of Merits that He Himself has made available?



1. WAY OF THE CROSS

2. THE ANGELUS

The Way of the Cross (1) and the Angelus (2) are two common and profitable prayers richly indulgenced. The Church attaches indulgences, by the blessing of a Bishop or Priest with special faculties, to such objects of devotion as rosaries, crucifixes, medals, images, etc., provided they are made of strong material. The indulgences are lost if the article is sold, not so if it is given away or loaned.

155. Gaining an Indulgence

What must we do to gain an indulgence?—To gain an indulgence, we must be in the state of grace, have at least a general intention of gaining the indulgence, and perform the works required by the Church.

1. We must be in the *state of grace;* that is, we must be free from all mortal sin. We must, besides, be free from all venial sin as well as all affection for sin, before we may gain a *plenary* indulgence.

One in mortal sin has incurred the punishment of hell, and cannot gain an indulgence. One in venial sin can gain a *partial indulgence.* In such a case the indulgence satisfies for sins already forgiven, but not for the unrepented venial sin.

2. We must have the *intention,* at least in a general way, of gaining the indulgence. We do not gain an indulgence by accident, without wishing to gain one.

It is well in our morning prayers to make a general intention to gain all the indulgences possible during the day. It is not necessary to express the intention each time an indulgence is to be gained.

3. We must *perform the works* required by the Church; we must comply exactly with the particular conditions required for the indulgence.

We must say the prayer or do the good work enjoined in the grant of indulgence. When vocal prayers are prescribed as a condition, the words must be pronounced *with the lips,* and not merely read or said mentally.

What are the "usual conditions" required for a plenary indulgence?—The "usual conditions" required for a plenary indulgence are: confession and Holy Communion, and praying for the intentions of the Pope.

1. These "usual conditions" are required *in addition* to the works prescribed for the particular indulgence.

Another condition often required is a visit to a church.

2. When *confession and communion* are conditions attached to a particular day, the confession may be made during the preceding or following week, and the communion on the vigil of the day, or in the week following.

More than one plenary indulgence may be gained at one and the same communion, provided the other works prescribed be accomplished severally.

3. Persons who are *accustomed to confess* at least twice a month need not do so especially, in order to gain the indulgence. Daily communicants have the same privilege.

This exemption from confession, however, does not hold good for *jubilee indulgences*. For those, a confession and communion must be offered each time a plenary indulgence is to be gained.

4. When a *visit* to a church is prescribed on a certain day, the visit may be made at any time from noon of the preceeding day to midnight of the day itself. Except when a particular church is specified, any church may be visited.

5. The "Pope's intentions" usually refer to the *welfare* of the Church and religion. The include, unless otherwise stated: (1) the exaltation of the Church; (2) the uprooting of heresies; (3) peace among Christian nations; (4) the propagation of the faith; and (5) the conversion of sinners.

For the Pope's intentions, it is sufficient to say five Our Fathers, five Hail Marys, and five Glory be to the Fathers, unless otherwise specified.

What objects are commonly indulgenced?—Indulgences may be attached to crucifixes, medals, rosaries, statues, and such objects, provided they are not made of very fragile material.

1. The object must be *blessed* by the Pope, or by some priest possessing the powers. The indulgence is lost if the object is more than half destroyed, or if it is sold, but not if the object is lent or given away.

All the *members of a family* may use the same rosary or crucifix, gaining indulgences attached.

2. More than one indulgence may be *attached to the same* rosary or crucifix. However, one and the same prayer will not avail to gain all the indulgences attached to any one object, unless expressly declared.

All crosses for rosaries *brought from Palestine*, which have touched the holy places, have the Apostolic indulgences attached to them.

What are some important indulgenced prayers?—Of the hundreds of indulgenced prayers, some of the most important are: the Rosary, the Way of the Cross, the Angelus, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, acts of faith, hope and charity, the prayers of Mass, and prayers at the hour of death.

1. The indulgence attached to some prayers may be gained *every time* they are said; in the case of other prayers the indulgence is gained only once a day.

Short prayers enriched with a plenary indulgence are: the prayer before a crucifix after Holy Communion, the prayer of resignation to God's will, and the prayer to Christ King of all.

2. There are many other indulgences, granted for the recital of certain prayers. Numerous *ejaculations* are heavily indulgenced, such as:

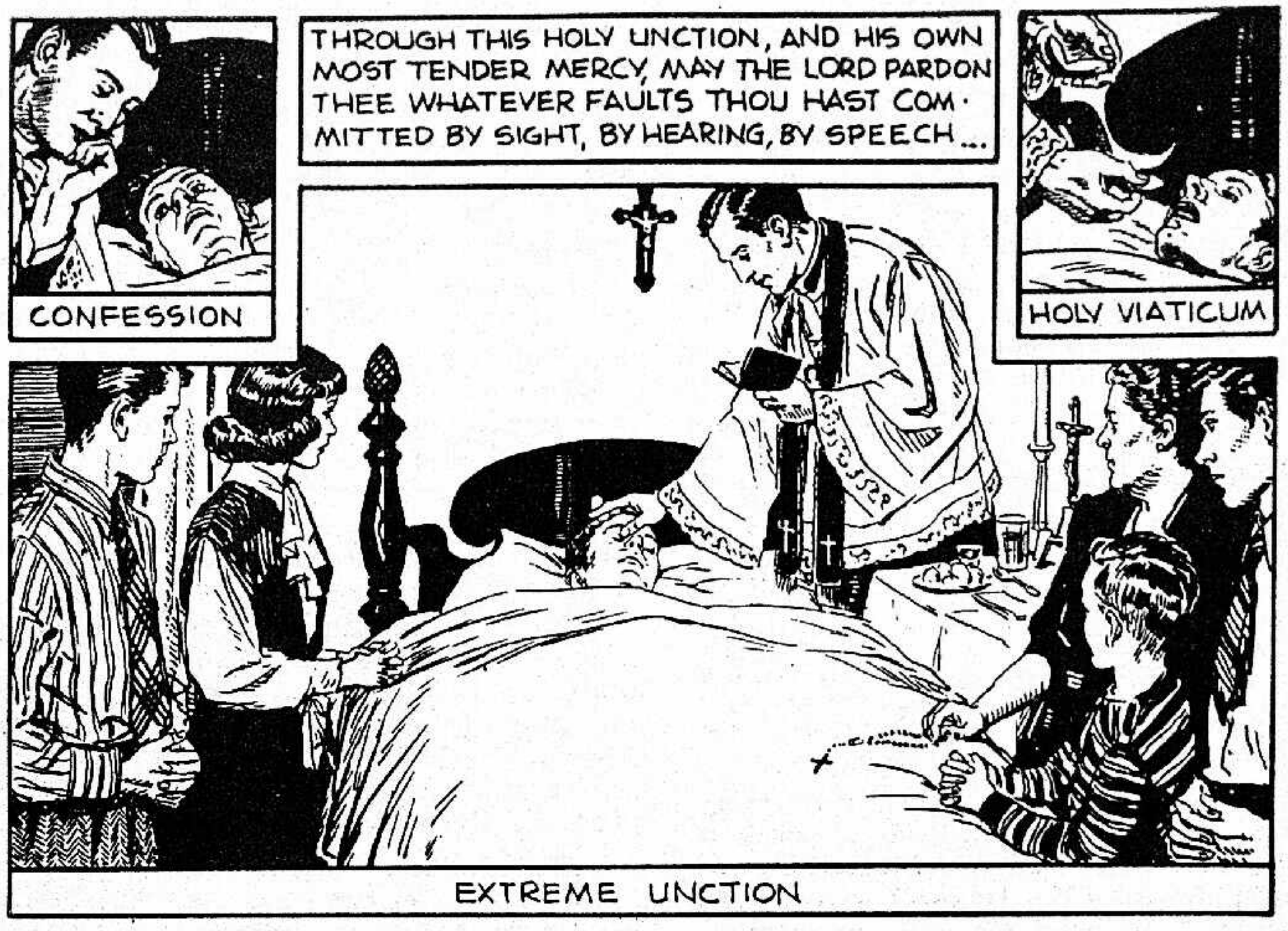
"Blessed be God!" "My Jesus, mercy!"
"Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy kingdom come!"
"All for thee, most Sacred Heart of Jesus!"

3. The indulgence attached to a prayer is lost by any change, addition, or omission substantially altering the prayer.

The Pontifical Academy of Sciences

Science is not repugant to Religion; both should interest the true Catholic. Science is the work of God's Hands; Religion, the work of His Spirit. Besides the well-known and numerous scientific societies established in our Catholic universities, the Church has the outstanding Pontifical Academy of Sciences, founded in 1603, among the first members of which was Galileo himself.

The purpose of the Academy is to promote the study of the physical, mathematical and natural sciences. It was reorganized by Pope Pius XI in 1936; he then chose seventy outstanding scientists from all countries, and made them members for life. In 1941 the Pope Pius XI prize was conferred on Dr. Harlow Shapley of Harvard University.


THROUGH THIS HOLY UNCTION, AND HIS OWN MOST TENDER MERCY, MAY THE LORD PARDON THEE WHATEVER FAULTS THOU HAST COMMITTED BY SIGHT, BY HEARING, BY SPEECH...
CONFESSION
HOLY VIATICUM
EXTREME UNCTION

Thousands die every year without the benefit of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. If our faith means anything to us, it should teach us that the moment of death is of supreme importance. It may decide whether we shall be forever with God in heaven, or whether we shall suffer eternally in hell. We should see to it that the very sick receive Extreme Unction, to help them face their Judge.

156. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction

What is Extreme Unction? – Extreme Unction is the sacrament which, through the anointing with blessed oil by the priest, and through his prayer, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age.

1. It was to *cure the sick* and console the afflicted that Our Lord worked many of His miracles. The Gospels give us vivid pictures of Him as He went about doing good, and "healing every disease and every sickness among the people" (Matt. 4:23).

"Now when the sun was setting, all who had sick with various diseases brought them to him. And he laid his hands upon each of them and cured them" (Luke 4:40). So today, Christ comes to us in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and, if it be for the good of our soul, cures us of our sickness, saying to us, as He did to so many long ago, "Arise, be thou made whole."

2. When Our Lord first sent out the *Apostles*, they "cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many sick people, and healed them" (Mark 6:13).

These words from Holy Scripture imply the institution by Our Lord of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. Then, before His Ascension, He promised His disciples certain wonderful signs that should accompany and follow them that believed in Him: "In My name they shall cast out devils; . . . they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover."

3. It is a certainty that the *Apostles conferred* Extreme Unction, as directly recommended and promulgated for the use of the faithful in the Epistle of St. James.

"Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James 5:14-15).

4. The outward sign or ceremony is the anointing with blessed oil, at the same time that the words are pronounced: *"Through this holy unction and His own most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever faults thou hast committed by sight (hearing, speech, etc.)."*

The priest anoints with consecrated oil in the form of a cross the five senses: eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands and feet. The anointing of the feet may be omitted, if there is any special reason. In case of urgent necessity, the anointing may be made on the forehead alone, and the words of the form made shorter.

5. Only a priest can administer Extreme Unction.

Who should receive Extreme Unction?—All Catholics who have reached the use of reason and are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age, should receive Extreme Unction.

1. As the primary purpose of the sacrament is to *restore* the soul weakened by sin and temptation, those who have never been capable of sinning cannot receive it. Hence idiots and *children* under the age of reason cannot receive Extreme Unction.

As the danger of death must arise from within, soldiers going to battle, prisoners about to be executed, passengers on a ship about to sink, etc., cannot receive the sacrament.

2. The sacrament may be received *only once* in the same illness. If the person recovers, and falls seriously sick once more, he may receive the sacrament again, even if the illness be the same disease.

The sacrament should be administered as soon as there is *danger of death*. Those attending sick persons should not wait till the person is actually dying before calling the priest. Generally, the restoration to health often worked by Extreme Unction is not produced miraculously, hence the reception of the sacrament must not be delayed.

3. Extreme Unction is a *sacrament of the living*. Hence the person must be in the state of grace. Before its reception, therefore, it is customary to go to confession, unless unable to do so.

Extreme Unction, which means "Last Anointing," is so called because it is the last of the sacramental anointings used by the Church, *not* because it is to be put off till the last moment when the sick are at the point of death.

What are the effects of the sacrament of Extreme Unction?—The effects of the sacrament of Extreme Unction are:

1. An increase of sanctifying *grace*.

Extreme Unction acts spiritually, as oil does materially: it strengthens, heals, and aids the soul. The effects of oil on the body are well known: oil is rubbed on athletes to give them greater energy and suppleness; oil has healing power for wounds.

2. *Comfort* in sickness and strength against temptation.

It gives one graces to console him and strengthen him against *temptation*. He obtains resignation to God's will, fortitude to suffer, and trust in God's mercy. This sacrament often effects a great change in the sick person: where he is previously impatient and difficult to please, he becomes resigned to the pains of his illness.

3. *Preparation for entrance* into heaven by the remission of our venial sins and the cleansing of our souls from the remains of sin. When the person does not recover, if he receives the sacrament with perfect dispositions, part, and even the whole, of the temporal penalties may be forgiven him.

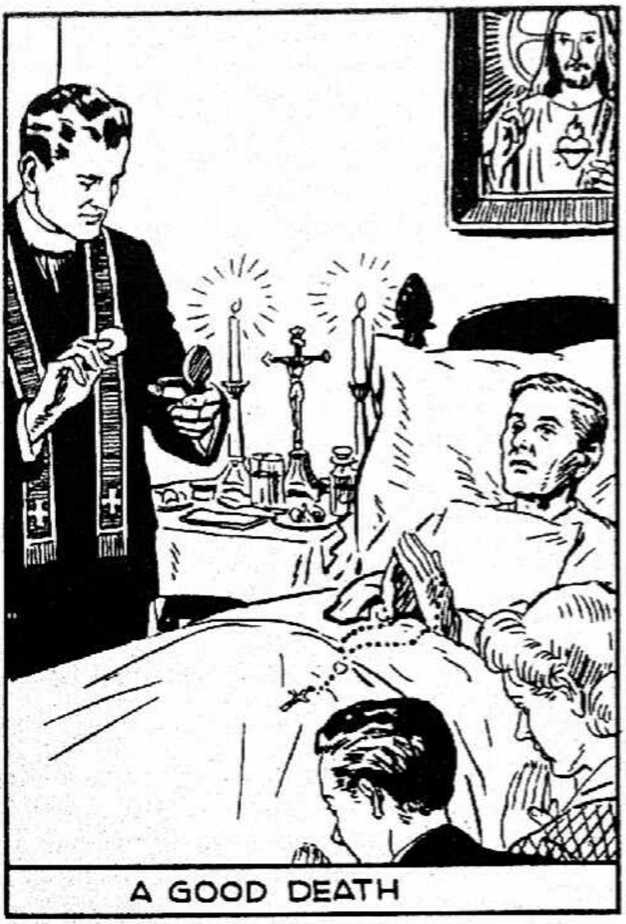
It *removes* venial sins, and unforgiven mortal sins that one is unable to confess, if he has attrition for them. It removes the *remains* of sin, which are: weakness of will and evil inclinations which are results of past sin.

4. *Health* of the body when this is good for the soul.

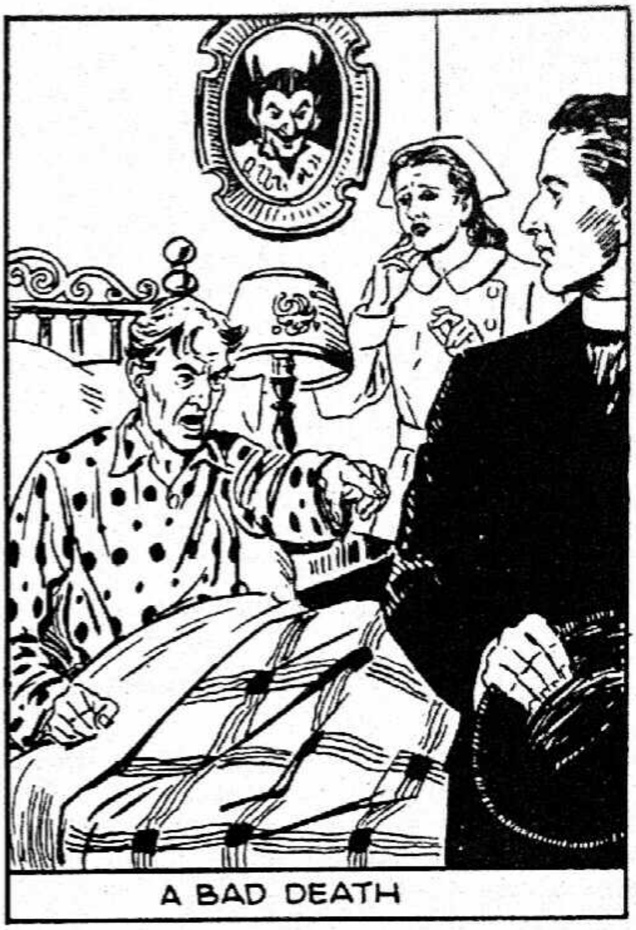
Extreme Unction frequently restores to health. Very often the peace of mind that follows confession, and the knowledge that Extreme Unction has reconciled one with God, react beneficially upon the body of a sick person and cause the restoration of his health.

When does Extreme Unction take away mortal sin?—Extreme Unction takes away mortal sin when the sick person is unconscious or otherwise unaware that he is not properly disposed, but has made an act of imperfect contrition.

An *unconscious person* may receive Extreme Unction. If he is guilty of mortal sin, and has attrition for it and falls unconscious before the arrival of the priest, Extreme Unction will restore him to sanctifying grace. However, should he recover, he is bound to confess his sins thus forgiven.



1. A good life is usually an assurance of a happy death. One who has lived all his days in an effort to please God is not likely to turn an impenitent sinner at the last moment.



2. A wicked life is usually a forecast of a bad death. A hardened sinner refuses the Last Sacraments. Let us all pray God to deliver us from a bad death.

157. The Last Sacraments

What are the Last Sacraments?—They are the sacraments administered to a person dangerously ill, and include Confession, Viaticum, and Extreme Unction.

1. The *sick person* first makes his confession, then receives the Holy Eucharist in the Viaticum, and finally is given Extreme Unction.

Extreme Unction is a remedy; and as medicine is for the living, not the dead, so those dead in sin will not profit from this spiritual remedy. However, if the patient is physically unable to confess, the Church accepts the intention and administers Extreme Unction without confession.

2. When a person is dangerously sick, we should call the priest to administer the Last Sacraments to him. It is very wrong to *delay* calling the priest till the person is already on the point of death. While his mind is clear, he can prepare for the Last Sacraments better, profit more from them.

When Extreme Unction is given while the person is still strong, there is more likelihood of his recovering. We have a serious obligation, if we are taking care of a sick person, to call the priest the moment there is danger of death. Except in cases of emergency, the pastor of the parish to which the sick person belongs, or the pastor's curates or assistants, should be called to administer the Last Sacraments.

3. Some people *do not call* the priest to administer the Last Sacraments because they fear the patient would be frightened and become worse.

This is *a great mistake,* for actual observation has proved that a sick person is always more calm and peaceful after the visit of the priest. Our Lord instituted Extreme Unction in order to quiet and comfort the sick, not the dead.

4. It is advisable to call the priest to *visit the sick* in any serious illness, even though there be no apparent danger of death. It is the priest's duty to visit the sick and administer the sacraments they need.

"My son, in your sickness neglect not yourself, but pray to the Lord, and He shall heal you" (Ecclus. 38:9).

5. We can help a sick person by nursing and consoling him. Every day we should make with him and for him *acts* of faith, hope, and charity. Above all, we should help him feel absolute resignation to God's will.

It is a mistake to try to help a dangerously sick person by conversing on worldly topics or retailing gossip, or holding out false hopes of recovery.

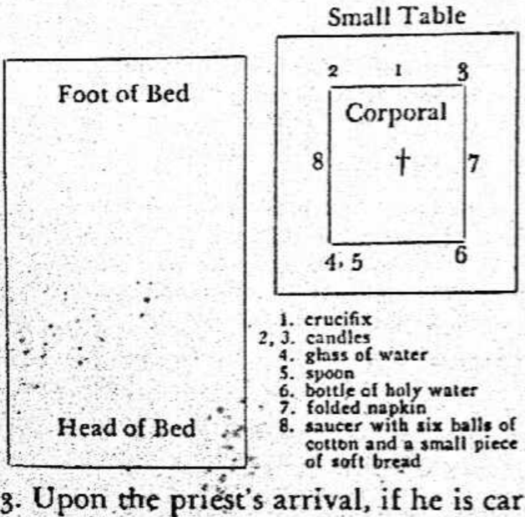
How should we help a sick person prepare for the Last Sacraments?—We should help a sick person prepare for the Last Sacraments both spiritually and corporally.

1. Before the priest arrives we should help the patient *get ready* for his Confession. Let us say with him acts of contrition, and ejaculations to keep him united with God.

2. The patient's face, hands, and feet should be *sponged* with a wet towel.

There should be ready towards the foot of the bed, to the right, a table with a clean white cloth. On it should be a crucifix, two lighted candles, some holy water, and a glass of fresh water with a tablespoon. There should also be a clean napkin, a saucer with six balls of cotton, and a piece of soft bread, or one or two slices of lemon for the hands of the priest, for wiping off the anointing. A basin of water and a towel should be near by, so the priest can wash his hands after the anointing.

The following is a diagram showing the placing:



1. crucifix
2, 3. candles
4. glass of water
5. spoon
6. bottle of holy water
7. folded napkin
8. saucer with six balls of cotton and a small piece of soft bread

3. Upon the priest's arrival, if he is carrying the Blessed Sacrament, we should meet him with a lighted blessed candle, *in silence.*

The priest himself brings the corporal, on which he lays the pyx containing the Blessed Sacrament.

How can we help a dying person?—We can help a dying person with prayer.

1. We should kneel near the patient's bed and recite the *prayers for the dying,* which may be found in most prayer-books. We should suggest to him short ejaculations that he can easily repeat, at least in his mind. We should recite with him especially those prayers which are enriched with *plenary indulgences* for the hour of death.

The Papal benediction with attached plenary indulgence is gained by saying the holy Name of Jesus. If unable to say it, the person must at least think it, and with contrition kiss a blessed crucifix.

2. The following prayer is *enriched* with a plenary indulgence at the hour of death: "O my God, I now at this moment readily and willingly accept at Thy hand whatever kind of death Thou mayest wish to send me, with all its pains, penalties, sorrows."

A person in good health, who recites this prayer in the state of grace, after confession and communion, may gain a plenary indulgence to *take effect* at the hour of death.

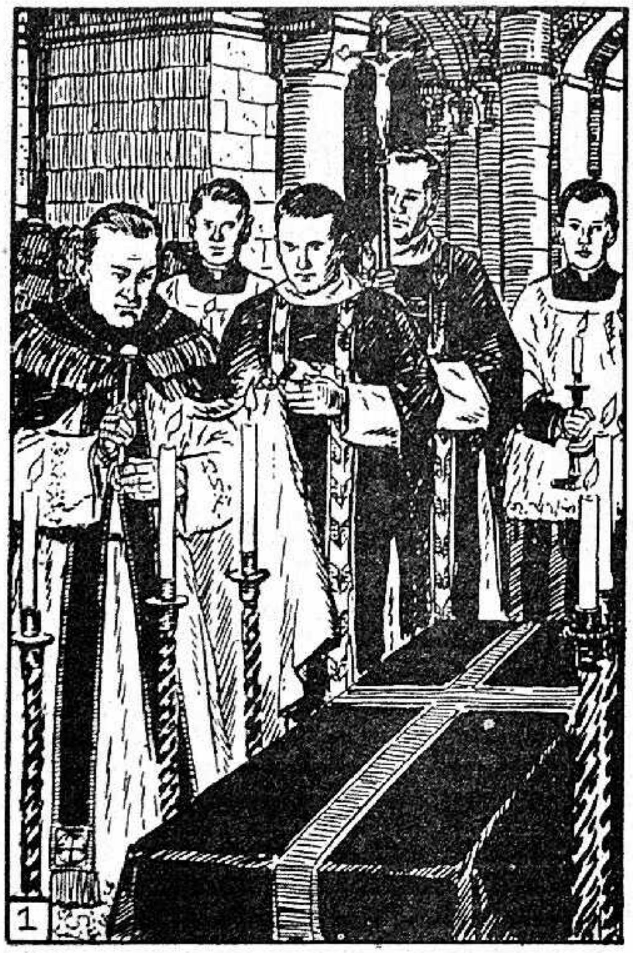
If we reflect that a plenary indulgence gained with proper dispositions means that the soul will go straight *from death-bed to Heaven,* we would be more zealous in helping the dying gain one.

3. During the agony, we should sprinkle the bed and the dying person with holy water. Those around should pray, instead of fussing, or showing too extreme grief.

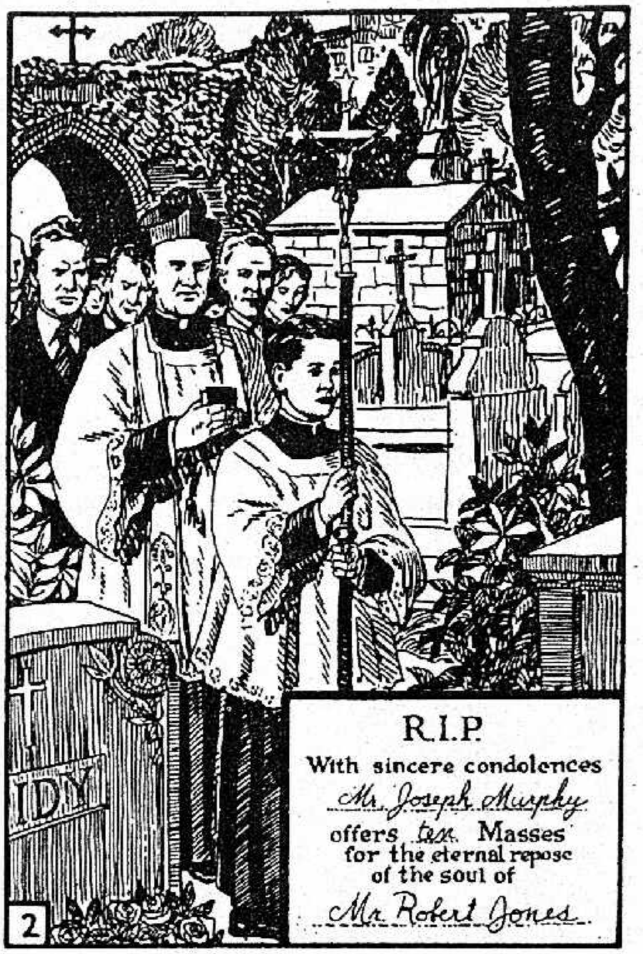
The first thing which we can offer immediately to God in relief of the soul of a loved one is an act of resignation to His holy will. Let us humbly say, "Lord, Thy will be done!" In those places where the beautiful custom is practiced, the "passing bell" should be ordered rung, in order that other Christians may pray for the departed soul.

In case of sudden or unexpected death, should a priest be called?—In case of sudden or unexpected death, a priest should be called always, because absolution and Extreme Unction can be given conditionally for some time after apparent death.

If a person is apparently dead and has not received the Last Sacraments, we should immediately call the priest. A person may continue to live two or three hours after death has apparently taken place, especially if it is sudden. In that case Extreme Unction will avail his soul.



1. The ceremonies for burial include services in the church. They vary from the very elaborate to the simplest. Holy water and lighted tapers express our desire to see the departed cleansed and admitted into the kingdom of light. Incense symbolizes our wish to have prayers ascend to God.



2. The body of the departed Catholic is borne in procession to the cemetery. At a funeral it is wrong to laugh or converse; we should pray for the repose of the departed. The small card announces the best offering one can make to a bereaved family: Holy Masses for the soul departed.

158. Christian Burial

How should the body of a dead person be prepared for burial?—For burial, the body of a dead person should be washed, dressed modestly, and laid out neatly.

1. *Lay out* the body in a dignified and becoming manner, but leave out all worldly vanity that savors of paganism. Remember that that body is sacred; it was the temple of the Holy Ghost.

What a mockery of Christian ideals do we find only too often today, when everything possible is done to eliminate thoughts of death! The face of the deceased is rouged and retouched; the lips are painted berry red; the body is perfumed and powdered; the nails are varnished. Are we or are we not Christians? Do we honestly believe that cosmetics can help our beloved dead, that at that moment must already be suffering in purgatory?

2. After the body is washed and clothed, *place a crucifix* between the folded hands on the breast. Set one or two lighted candles at each side of the coffin. The room should be as quiet as possible, in order that friends who can call may be able to pray.

It is well to ponder on the truth, as we look at a dead face without cosmetics, that we too will some day have to arrive at our journey's end, and stand before the throne of God divested of all worldly decorations and masks.

How should funerals be conducted?—Funerals should be conducted with dignity and devotion; they should not be extravagant and beyond the family means.

1. Some have the tendency to have *pompous funerals* for dead members of their

families, asserting that it is the last thing they can give for their dead. This feeling is understandable; but it certainly shows a lack of proportion if this generous feeling results in the payment of large amounts of money for grand funeral coaches and footmen, while the offering of prayers and especially of Masses is neglected.

If a family has means, suitable offerings should be given to the priest who attended the deceased during his illness, and adequate fees paid for the funeral services. Donations should be made to the Church and alms given to the poor, for the repose of the soul of the deceased; charity and Masses will avail the dead person's soul more than gold coaches and truckloads of wreaths.

2. There are very solemn *services* accompanied by many ceremonies. There are also very simple services. God will hear the prayers during the simple as during the elaborate ceremonies, according to the devotion of those who pray.

The body should be taken to the church for the blessing, and if possible should be present at a Requiem Mass. The ceremonial of the Church for funerals is touching and significant, and rightly understood will benefit the living as well as the dead. It is not an empty show designed to glorify the dead and express sympathy to the living; it is a devotion calculated to help the departed soul attain its eternal reward, as well as to teach salutary lessons to those left behind.

3. Those who *accompany a funeral* to the cemetery should observe great recollection, and a serious demeanor. The playing of *"jazz" pieces* by a band during the funeral is to be condemned.

Unfortunately some people follow funerals as if they were in a worldly function, talking aloud and gossiping. A salutary thought would be to reflect that they might be the next to go that way to the cemetery.

4. Catholics should be buried in a *Catholic cemetery*, if there is one; at least the grave should be blessed. Some day the bodies will rise in glory, and be united with their souls in heaven; is it befitting their high destiny to bury them like animal carcasses in unconsecrated ground?

Over the place of burial a large cross should be erected. Generally, the letters *R.I.P.* (*Requiescat in pace:* May he rest in peace) are engraved on the headstone. And here a word about graves and mausoleums. The holy St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine, said: "Bury this body wherever you please. One thing only I ask of you, and that is, remember me at the altar of the Lord."

A simple grave, an elaborate mausoleum,—it is all the same to those departed. It is of course natural for those who can afford it to build mausoleums where all the members of the family can be buried together. What is to be avoided is the erection of ostentatious structures that appear more like gaudy showhouses than sepulchers of Christians. The cross should be prominent; the inscriptions, should be liturgical, not taken from popular songs or sentimental rhymes.

5. Non-Catholics, Freemasons, those excommunicated as deliberate suicides, duellists, and those who ordered their bodies cremated, are denied Christian burial.

Let us remember: to spend money on showy mausoleums while holding the purse strings tight against charity would be contrary to right reason: Surely splendid structures cannot avail the dead. Unfortunately, they continue to be built to satisfy the vanity of the living; meanwhile, these living relatives forget to pray, to have Masses said, to give alms to the poor, as an offering for the departed soul.

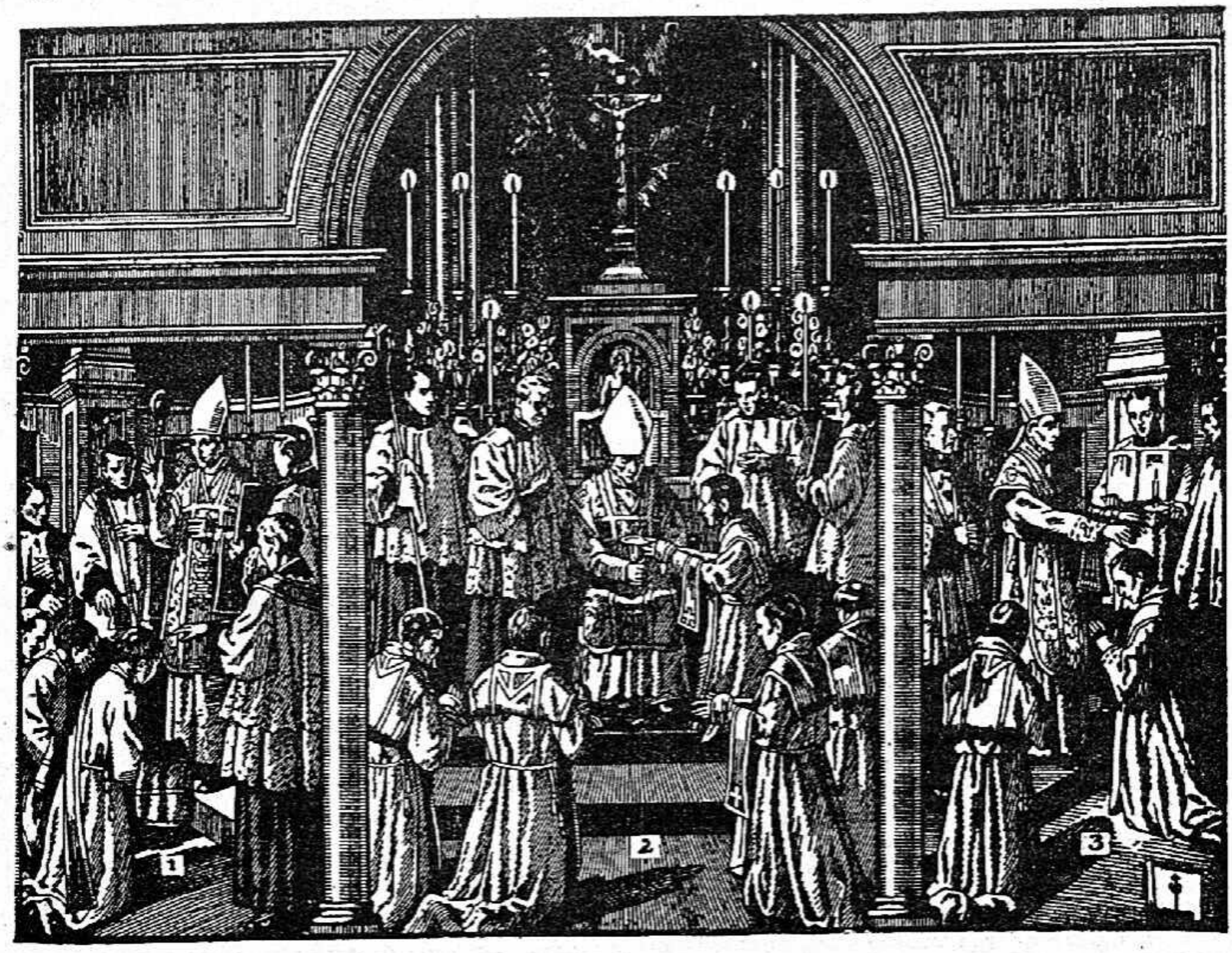
From whom should we seek consolation when someone dear to us dies?—When someone dear to us dies, we should seek consolation from God, Who is our eternal Healer, Comforter, and Friend.

1. Nothing on earth can give *lasting comfort* to bereaved hearts. But if we live our faith, the death of a beloved one should not drive us into despair; for one who goes in God's grace, "to die is gain", to die is to attain eternal union with God. For the just who die, death is truly no more.

"But the just man, if he be prevented with death, shall be in rest" (Wis. 4:7). As Our Lord assures us: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, even if he die, shall live; and whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

2. To the bereaved, God in His infinite mercy extends, through our Mother Church, the *consoling assurance* of Purgatory. This knowledge bridges the chasm yawning between us and our dear departed; it makes us feel that death has not cut the bonds of love uniting us with them. Instead of desolation for our loss, we find surcease for sorrow, and a practical expression of our affection in prayers and good works offered to God in behalf of our beloved dead, who may still be in purgatory.

This is one reason for the necessity of understanding thoroughly the doctrine of purgatory (*see pages* 156-159). As St. Paul said, "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep, lest you should grieve, even as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13).



Ordination to the priesthood takes place during the celebration of Mass. After the candidates have prostrated themselves on their faces before the altar, the Bishop lays his hands on the head of each, the priests present doing the same. He puts on them the sacerdotal vestments (1). The Holy Ghost is invoked. He then anoints the hands of each with sacred chrism in the form of a cross. He makes each touch the chalice and paten, to show that the power to offer Mass is conferred (2). The new priests say Mass with the Bishop. After Communion, the Bishop again lays his hands on the head of each (3) and says: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive. . . ."

159. The Sacrament of Holy Orders

What is Holy Orders?—Holy Orders is the sacrament through which men receive the power and grace to perform the sacred duties of bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ *instituted* this sacrament. At the Last Supper He gave the Apostles and their successors the power *to say Mass.* He said, after consecrating His Body and Blood:

"Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Thus He gave the Apostles the power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. On the day of the Resurrection Our Lord gave the disciples power to *forgive sins.* He breathed on them and said:

"As the Father has sent me, I also send you. . . . Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23).

3. Finally, before the Ascension, Christ gave His disciples the mission *to preach* the Gospel and *dispense the sacraments.*

"All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

4. The *Apostles,* in compliance with the wishes of Christ, administered the sacrament of Holy Orders.

They consecrated Paul and Barnabas Bishops with prayer and the imposition of hands. In the same way St. Paul ordained Timothy. When the Apostles established churches, upon their departure, they ordained and appointed successors (*bishops*) to whom they gave full powers, and other ministers (*priests*) to whom they transmitted part of their powers. "For this reason I admonish thee to stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6).

What are some of the requirements for a man, to receive Holy Orders worthily?—Some of the requirements are: an excellent character, the prescribed age and learning, the intention of devoting his life to the sacred ministry, and a state of grace.

It is not necessary, in order to become a worthy priest, to receive a direct call from God; it is likely that of those who are now in the priesthood, not one had a visible apparition to inform him of his vocation to the priesthood. So long as you feel a spiritual attraction to the life of a priest, if you admire heroic priests and saints, then that is enough of a call, if joined with the other qualifications for entering the priesthood.

1. A man must be of excellent *character.* This implies good will and virtuous conduct, as well as good sense.

Good sense is needed if a priest is to do good to souls. The delicate functions exercised by a priest, especially as a judge of souls, would exclude from priesthood a person of an unbalanced disposition, or one who is wanting in prudence.

2. He must have finished a *seminary course* successfully, and must have completed his twenty-fourth year. In the minor seminary the course usually consists of four or five years of Latin and Greek, together with secondary school subjects. In the major seminary the course includes philosophy and other collegiate subjects for two or three years, then four years of theology, with Holy Scripture, Church History, Canon Law, Liturgy, Sociology, etc.

A man must have a *good mind* in order to make successfully the studies for the priesthood. Besides, here in our country as elsewhere the priest is almost always compelled to defend the doctrines of the Church from attacks of its enemies. One without a good mind cannot well answer such attacks. Moreover, such a priest would cause a lack of respect among the laity towards the priesthood.

3. He must be sincere in the intention to devote his *entire life* to the sacred ministry. This includes willingness to bear whatever burdens and difficulties the priesthood may bring, for the love of God. It presupposes a right intention for entering the priestly state.

No one should enter the priesthood because his parents have forced it on him. On the other hand, no one should abandon a desire to become a priest just because other people oppose it. One must enter the priesthood of his own free will, because he loves God and believes it is the best way to save his own soul, and other souls for Christ. It would be very wrong to become a priest just to assure oneself of a living.

4. Holy Orders is a sacrament of the living; therefore the recipient must be in the *grace of God.* In general if a boy has good will, good health, a good mind, good sense, and a desire to dedicate himself to the service of God, he has the qualifications necessary for the priesthood.

A priest needs *good health* because of the many responsibilities of his office; he may be sent to distant and undeveloped missions where food is difficult to get, where sanitary conditions are bad.

Who is the minister of the sacrament of Holy Orders?—The bishop is the minister of the sacrament of Holy Orders.

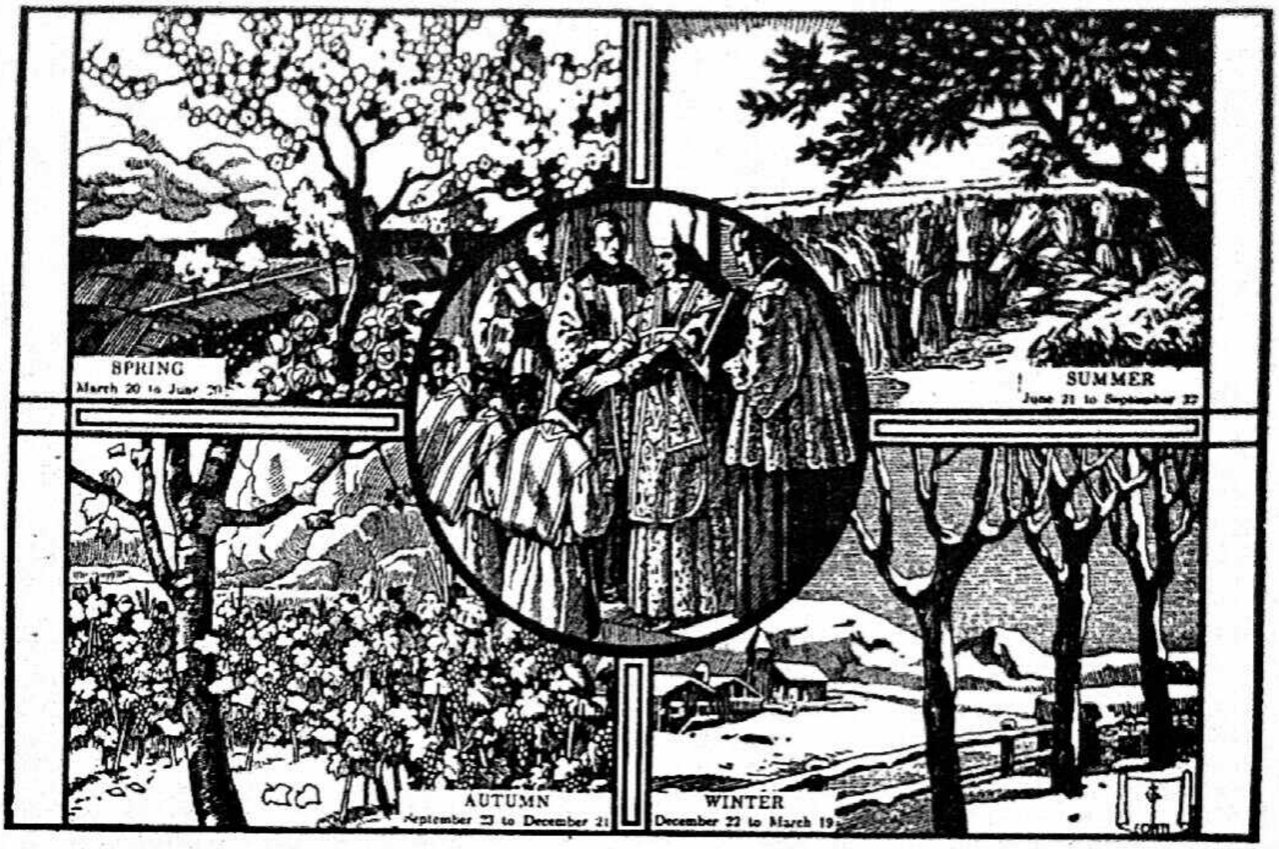
Three bishops consecrate a new bishop.

1. The candidate must be called to Holy Orders by his *Bishop.* Before ordination the bishop must be satisfied that the applicant has the virtue and physical and mental fitness required of a priest, and that he is free from any canonical irregularity.

By Baptism all Christians are endowed with the spiritual "priesthood" of laymen, by which they have the obligation to offer up to God *spiritual* sacrifices of prayers and mortification and acts of faith, hope, and charity. But only those men who receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders are *priests,* ministers of God, in the full sense of the word.

2. The sacrament of Holy Orders is administered by means of *ceremonies* that vary with the kind of orders conferred. It consists in the sign of the imposition of hands by the bishop, together with the accompanying words of ordination, varying with the order being conferred.

"You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). "He who receives you, receives me; and he who receives me, receives him who sent me" (Matthew 10:40).



At the beginning of the four seasons—Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter—the Ember Days are celebrated to implore God's blessings on the fruits of the earth; those days are likewise intended as special occasions for praying for the clergy. The Ember Days are the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays following December 13, the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost and September 14. Ordinations take place on Ember Saturdays. Ember Days are days of penance, fasting, and abstinence.

160. Major and Minor Orders

What are the major orders?—The major orders are the: subdiaconate, diaconate, and priesthood.

1. The ***subdiaconate*** is still a *preparation* for the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and is of ecclesiastical institution. A subdeacon is pledged to perpetual celibacy and the daily recitation of the Divine Office.

The subdeacon presents the water at High Mass, sings the epistle, brings the vessels to the altar, holds the paten during the canon, and gives the kiss of peace to the choir. In practice, today all these are done by a priest.

2. The ***diaconate*** is the lowest degree in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The deacon receives *sacramental* grace.

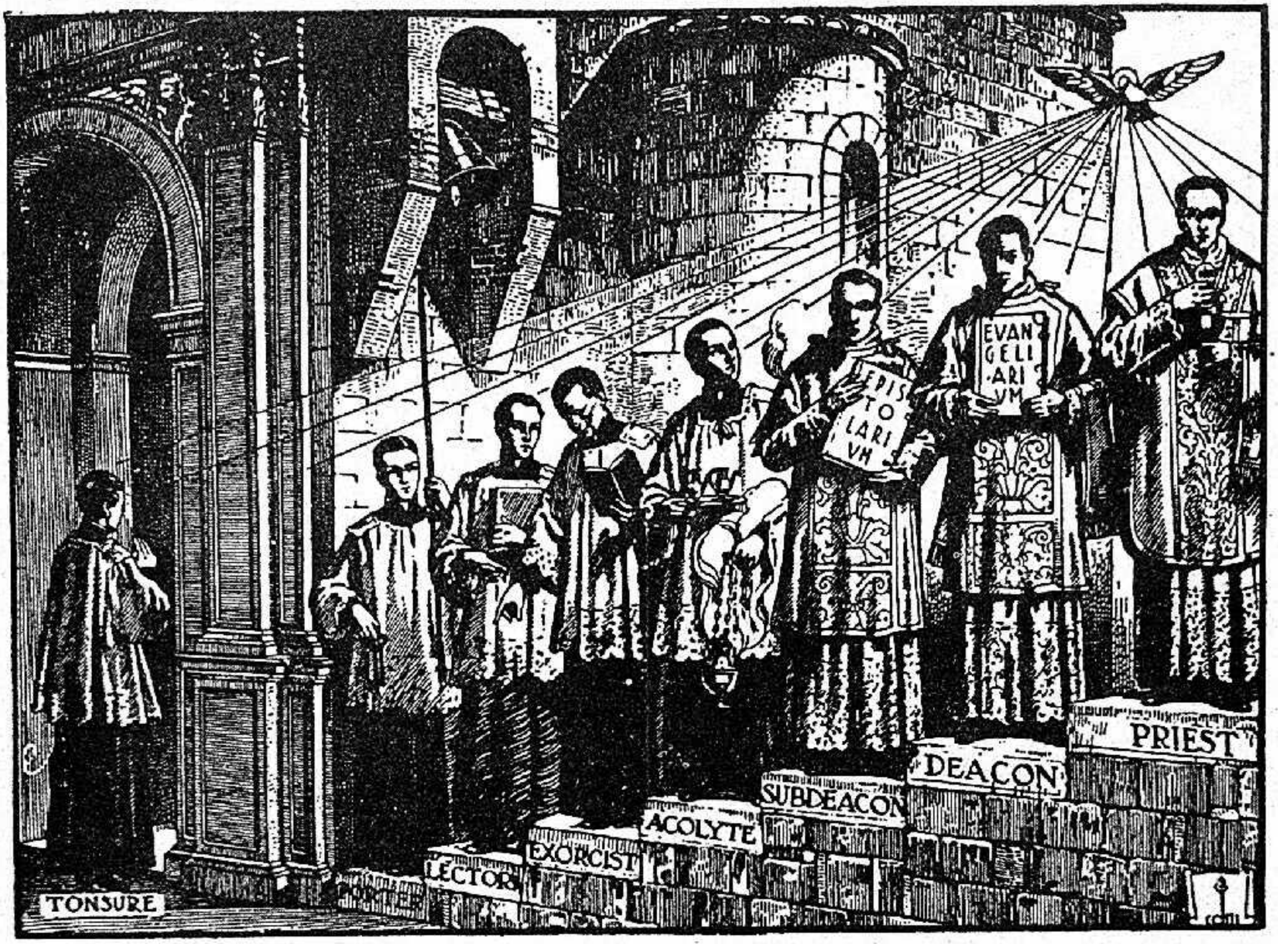
The deacon assists the priests at Holy Mass, reads or sings the Gospel, preaches; at High Mass he incenses the celebrant and the choir, gives the altar bread, pours wine into the chalice, takes off the pall and puts it on, receives the kiss of peace, etc. Today, the one performing these ceremonies is generally a priest, although during the divine function he is termed deacon.

3. The ***priesthood*** is the second degree in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The episcopate, which is the highest degree in the Sacrament, is the *fullness of the priesthood.*

Thus priests may be classified into two grades: (a) priests, and (b) bishops.

(a) Those who by ordination to the *priesthood* have power to offer Holy Mass, to administer solemn Baptism, and Extreme Unction; but who need jurisdiction for Penance and the administration of Matrimony and an indult for Confirmation, except when, acting as "extraordinary ministers," they administer Confirmation to those in danger of death from serious illness.

(b) Those of the *episcopacy* possessing the additional power of administering Confirmation and Holy Orders.



As an introduction to Holy Orders, a candidate receives the tonsure. The minor orders follow: porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte. Then come the major orders: subdeacon, deacon, and priest. Finally, at his consecration, a bishop receives the fullness of the priesthood.

4. The ordinations of a deacon and a priest, and the consecration of a bishop, are only *three degrees* in a single sacrament, which confers orders for each degree.

By means of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the graces earned by the sacrifice of Christ are to be applied to the faithful of all times. "As the Father has sent me, I also send you"—for the same ***ends:*** to glorify God and lead men to salvation; by the same ***means:*** through prayer and teaching; in difficulties and against obstacles, and with the promise of ultimate victory: "And I appoint to you a kingdom, even as my Father has appointed to me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you shall sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29-30).

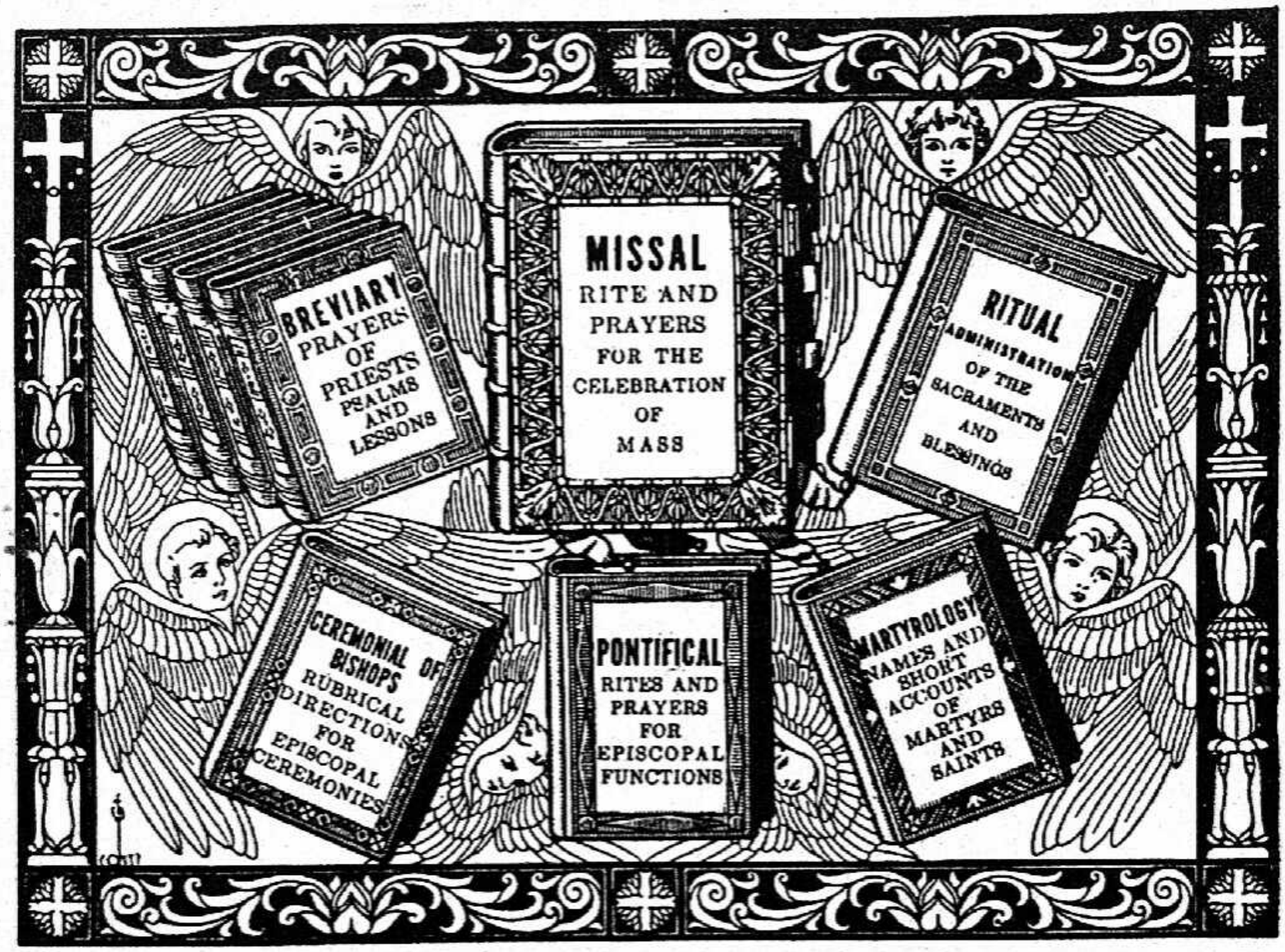
What are the minor orders?—The minor orders are the lower ranks of the clergy, through which aspirants are prepared to receive holy priesthood: porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte.

1. Minor orders were *instituted by the Church* in the early days when men of outstanding merit performed certain offices. They are not a sacrament, but only preparatory steps to major orders.

For the minor orders the *symbols* of office are handed over to the aspirant, with accompanying words constituting the form. Given to the (a) porter is a key, with the right to guard over the church doors; (b) lector, a book with the right to read certain passages of Holy Scripture when ordered by priest or bishop; (c) exorcist, the book of exorcisms, with the right to exorcise evil spirits; and (d) acolyte, a candlestick, with the right to carry lights and give wine and water at Holy Mass.

2. Minor orders are preceded by the *tonsure*, a ceremony of cutting part of the hair, to denote admission into the holy ministry.

By the tonsure a cleric is *incardinated* or assigned to the diocese to which he will belong upon his ordination. He may not change to another diocese without the consent of his bishop and the bishop of the diocese to which he wishes to transfer.


BREVIARY
PRAYERS OF PRIESTS PSALMS AND LESSONS
MISSAL
RITE AND PRAYERS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MASS
RITUAL
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS AND BLESSINGS
CEREMONIAL OF BISHOPS
RUBRICAL DIRECTIONS FOR EPISCOPAL CEREMONIES
PONTIFICAL
RITES AND PRAYERS FOR EPISCOPAL FUNCTIONS
MARTYROLOGY
NAMES AND SHORT ACCOUNTS OF MARTYRS AND SAINTS

Rubrics are rules for the proper execution of the services of the Church, for the exact conduct of any liturgical function. The rubrics of the Church are contained in the Missal, Breviary, Ritual, Pontifical, and Ceremonial. In books, rubrics are printed in red, for clearness and distinction. The chief liturgical books of the Latin Rite are six:

The Missal contains all the prayers and ceremonies used for Mass, for each day of the year.

The Breviary is the priests' prayer book, containing the Divine Office without chant.

The Ritual contains all the services needed by a priest which are not in the Missal or Breviary, such as the administration of the sacraments.

The Pontifical and Ceremonial are the Bishops' books. They contain the rites for episcopal functions such as Pontifical Mass, Confirmation, ordinations, consecration of altars, etc.

The Martyrology is an enlarged calendar giving names and short accounts of the lives of the principal saints commemorated on each day of the year, in different parts of the Catholic world.

161. Powers and Duties of Priests

What are the effects of ordination to the priesthood?—The effects are:

1. An increase of *sanctifying grace.*

One of the *purposes* of God for calling a man to the sacred ministry is to have him offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This is a most high office, for the accomplishment of which God surely gives grace, and more grace.

2. *Sacramental grace,* through which the priest has God's help in his sacred ministry.

The duties of God's ministers are innumerable and difficult; they must have sacramental grace. And God, Who knows this well, certainly furnishes all necessary with the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

3. *A character,* lasting forever, which is a sharing in the priesthood of Christ, and which gives the priest supernatural powers.

Once a man is ordained priest, he is *a priest forever.* The sacrament imprints an indelible mark in the soul; it cannot therefore be repeated.

What are the chief supernatural powers of the priest?—The chief supernatural powers of the priest are: to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to forgive sins in the sacrament of Penance.

1. A ***priest*** is given the power to celebrate Mass, and administer the sacraments except Holy Orders and Confirmation. A ***Bishop*** can administer all the sacraments; he has the "plenitude of power", being made successor of the Apostles.

The priests who apostatize, or are suspended or excommunicated still remain priests. They retain the power, although *not the authority,* of priesthood. For example, they have the power of saying a true Mass, although they would sin grievously if they did so. However, they cannot forgive sin, except in the case of the dying; absolution is a judicial power, and needs jurisdiction.

2. The *schismatical Greek priests* have received their orders from validly ordained bishops. Therefore, even though they are not united to the Catholic Church, they have the power to say Mass.

When these schismatical priests return to the unity of the Church, they are not re-ordained.

3. Except for the schismatical churches, *no* non-Catholic denomination has had validly ordained bishops; none has true priests.

A number of these non-Catholic denominations call some of their ministers "bishops"; but they are so only in name, as they have not been validly ordained. And so with their other ministers; they are ***not*** priests, since they received no valid orders.

What are two classes of priests?—They are: secular priests and religious priests.

1. *Secular* (or diocesan) *priests* are those who belong to a diocese. They are bound to obey the bishop, and may not change from one diocese to another without the consent of the bishops of both dioceses.

Secular priests are generally in charge of the parishes; that is, they act as parish priests or pastors (also called *rectors*).

2. *Religious* (or regular) *priests* are those who are members of religious orders or congregations, such as the Augustinians, Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, Redemptorists, Salesians, etc. Religious are bound by the three evangelical vows of *poverty, chastity,* and *obedience.* They vow obedience to their superiors, and live in the community with their brethren.

Not all members of religious communities are priests. Many take the religious vows, but do not receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders; that is, they are not ordained. Then we call them *Brothers.*

What are the chief duties of a priest?—The chief duties of a priest are: to live in celibacy, and to recite the Divine Office daily; other duties vary in accordance with the function undertaken or position held.

1. The priestly *vow of celibacy* is taken when a man is received into the subdiaconate. Catholic priests *do not marry,* in imitation of Christ Himself. The Apostles, after they were called to the ministry, left all they had. Elias, Eliseus, Jeremias, and St. John the Baptist, lived in celibacy.

A priest is ordained for the exclusive service of God: his talents, his time, his very life belong to His service. St. Paul says: "He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas, he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided" (1 Cor. 7:32-33).

2. A priest must read the *Divine Office,* a series of prayers, in the Breviary; for this approximately one hour is needed every day.

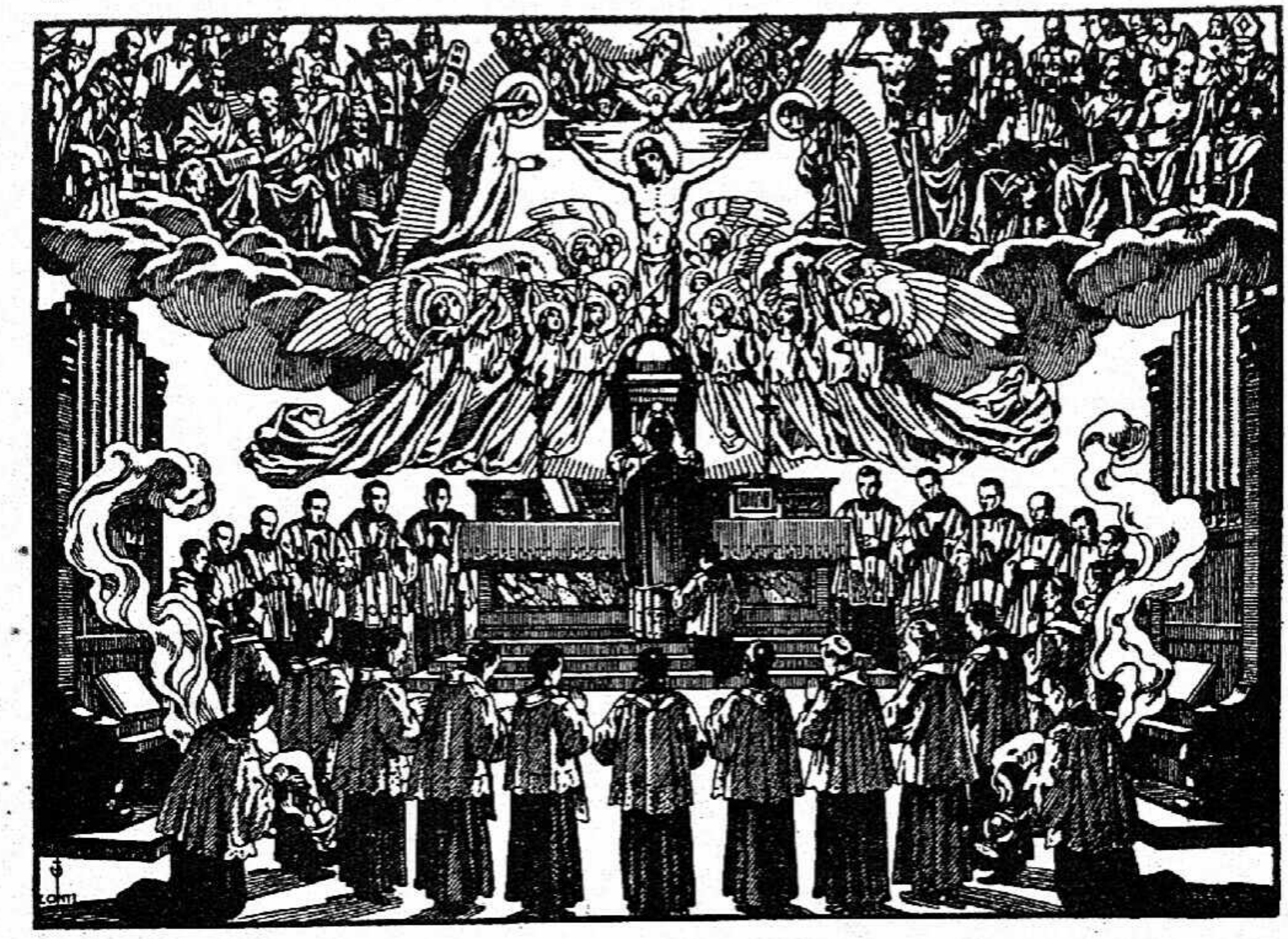
The Office is in prescribed and fixed order, including psalms, canticles, writings of the Old Testament prophets and of Apostles and Fathers of the Church, passages from the Gospels, hymns, and special prayers in honor of the Blessed Mother and the Saints. The reading of the Divine Office has not only devotional value as prayer; it also has a practical value, in refreshing the priest's memory regarding much of what he has learned, keeping him mentally alert, better qualified for his duties.

3. A *pastor* must be ready to visit the dying *at any hour* of the day or night, even though the patient be suffering from a contagious disease. He must instruct his people, and guard them from harm. A pastor is the shepherd of his flock.

He must build and maintain a church, a convent, a school. He must hear confessions hour after hour as long as there is need. He must administer the sacraments, say Mass, attend to the poor, etc.

4. *Religious,* or regular, priests generally devote themselves to prayer, and to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. They have charge of schools, hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions. They organize missions and retreats, and engage in press work and religious propaganda.

Religious are usually employed by the Pope as *missionaries* to convert the pagans. In many cases, they also act as parish priests.



Priesthood is the highest dignity on earth. The dignity of a priest surpasses that of emperors, and even of angels. No angel can convert bread into the Body of Christ by the mere power of his word; nor can any angel forgive sin. The priest stands between God and man. He is God's representative, God's ambassador. Therefore whatever honor we pay to the priest, we render to God Himself. St. Francis of Assisi said that if he met an angel and a priest at the same time, he should salute the priest first.

162. Dignity of Priesthood

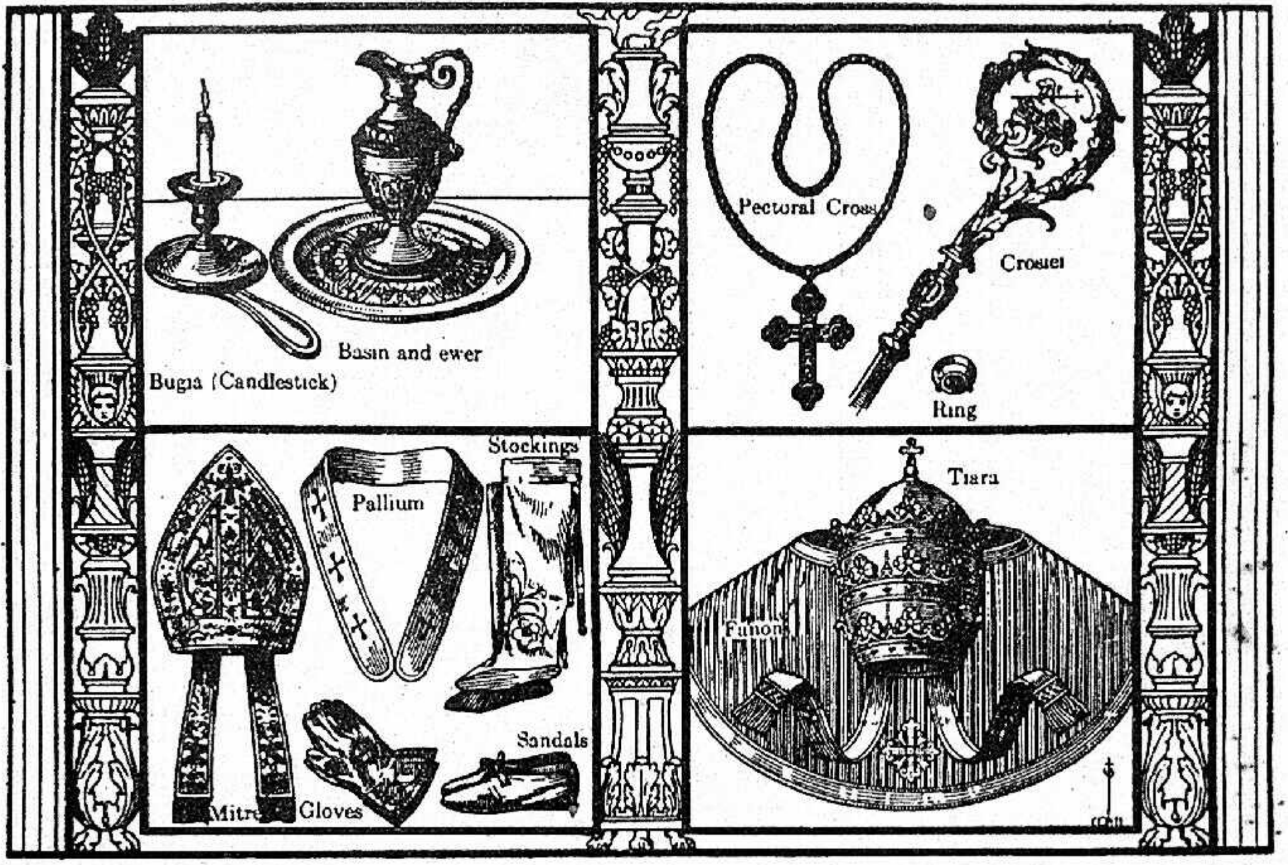
Why should Catholics show reverence and honor to the priest?—Catholics should show reverence and honor to the priest because he is the representative of Christ Himself, and the dispenser of His mysteries.

1. The dignity of a priest is higher than any earthly dignity, for he is the ***representative of God.*** He has power that the most powerful civil rulers do not possess. The humblest priest by his word can call down God upon the altar and convert bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. He can say to the sinner, "I absolve thee," and the sinners' soul is saved from hell. What earthly dignity can compare with this? Not even the Blessed Virgin possessed the power to forgive sins, to grant absolution that erases the very guilt of sin.

Even the pagan conqueror, Alexander the Great, respected the ministers of God, recognizing their dignity as His representatives. In one of his military expeditions he came to Jerusalem. The people were in a state of great fear, and offered prayers to obtain divine protection. The high priest with the rest of the clergy, clad in their ceremonial vestments, finally went to meet the king, to beg for mercy.

When Alexander saw the high priest, he bowed down low before him, while all present were filled with surprise. Upon later being asked by one of his generals why he had so humbled himself before one whom he had conquered, the king replied, "I did not pay reverence to the man, but to God, Whose priest he is."

2. We owe the priest reverence due to his dignity as representative of Christ. Even if a *priest's life* does not correspond with the requirements of his office, we should give respect; this we offer to his office.



The bugia is the candlestick a bishop uses at Mass. He uses a special basin and ewer for washing his hands at the altar. He wears a pectoral cross and uses the crosier on solemn occasions, such as when administering Confirmation. His ring, an amethyst stone, is kissed by the faithful in sign of respect. He wears the mitre at Pontifical Masses, as well as gloves, silk stockings, and sandals to match his vestments. The pallium is sent by the Pope to an archbishop after he has taken possession of his metropolitan see. It is worn on the shoulders.

The fanon is a shoulder cape which the Pope alone may wear. It has a gold cross embroidered in front, and is used when the Holy Father says solemn High Mass. He is the only one that is entitled to use the tiara, a triple crown surmounted by a cross.

The priest is "alter Christus"—***another Christ.*** Our Lord calls him "a city built upon a hill," the "salt of the earth." He is in the world, but not of it. St. Francis of Sales said of priests: "I will close my eyes to their faults, and only see in them God's representatives."

3. When we meet a priest, we should *salute* him: women and girls should bow, and men and boys should raise their hats.

We should not gossip about the priest, even if we should notice something we do not like in him: to calumniate a priest is sacrilege. One who lays violent hands on a priest is excommunicated.

4. In recognition of his dignity and the respect and support we owe him, we should not neglect *to help our priest,* with money or other means, such as teaching catechism, attending to the cleanliness and decoration of the church, and helping with expenses.

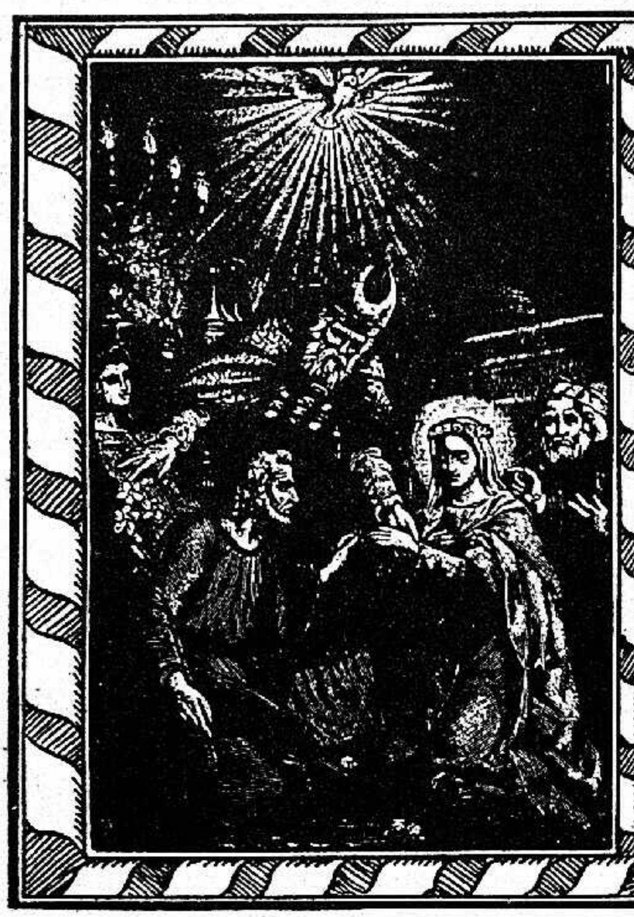
A good way of helping the priest is to join the parochial organizations he forms, such as Catholic Action and Confraternity of Christian Doctrine units, sodalities, leagues, etc.

Is there need of priests?—There is great need of priests everywhere, for Christianity is impossible without priests.

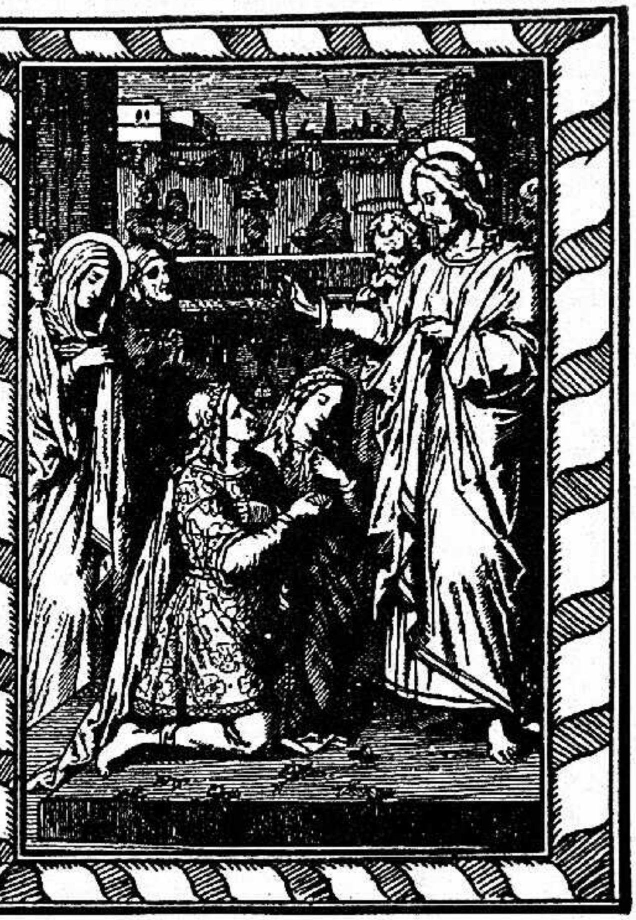
1. Many countries have only *a few priests.* Only about one-third of the world population is Christian, chiefly because there are not enough priests.

There are good Catholics who know their religion, but cannot practice it properly and receive the sacraments as often as they would, because there is no priest to administer to them. Many are *indifferent,* or have joined false churches: they have not had sufficient instruction, for lack of priests.

2. We need priests to go as *missionaries* to non-Christian lands. We ought to show our gratitude for the grace of faith by helping to spread it among people less fortunate.



1. Christian marriage unites one man and one woman for life. Every couple should imitate the peace and love that reigned in the home of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the models of Christian spouses.



2. Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament. It was at the wedding feast of Cana that He worked His first miracle, thus honoring the occasion, and proclaiming the holiness of the married state.

163. The Sacrament of Matrimony

What is the sacrament of Matrimony?— Matrimony is the sacrament by which a baptized man and a baptized woman bind themselves for life in a lawful marriage, and receive the grace to discharge their duties.

1. God *instituted* matrimony in the Garden of Eden, when He created Adam and Eve. "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. (Gen. 2:24). Before the coming of Christ, matrimony was a *sacred contract*, but not a sacrament. ***Our Lord*** raised matrimony to the dignity of a ***sacrament.***

At the marriage feast at Cana Christ worked His first miracle, thus manifesting the holiness of the married state. In the marriage contract, God has made a natural relation a means of grace for Christians. Our Lord instituted special sacraments for two states of life: the Priesthood and Matrimony; from this fact we may deduce the importance He attached to these states of life. By the sacrament of Matrimony God grants the contracting parties grace to bear the difficulties of the married state, and to sanctify their common life for God's glory and the salvation of their souls.

2. The sacrament of matrimony *consists* in the mutual expression by both contracting parties of their free consent to take each other as husband and wife.

This is the *main act* in the marriage ceremony. Without it, no marriage takes place. After this mutual consent is expressed, even if something should interrupt the rest of the ceremonies, the couple are validly married.

3. The *ministers* of the sacrament of matrimony are the contracting parties themselves, the groom and the bride. The priest

is the witness authorized by the Church to be present and bless the union.

This is because marriage is a ***contract***, and they who make the contract therefore must perform the marriage. In Baptism, the one who baptizes, and in the other sacraments, the bishop or priest, is the minister, but in matrimony the *bride and groom* are the ministers.

Why is every true marriage between a baptized man and a baptized woman a sacrament?—Every true marriage between a baptized man and a baptized woman is a sacrament, because Christ Himself has raised every marriage of this kind to the dignity of a sacrament.

1. A marriage between *baptized non-Catholics*, if contracted in a valid way, is always a sacrament, and is so recognized by the Church. It can be broken only by the death of one of the parties.

The Church does not recognize the "marriage" of divorced baptized non-Catholics whose previous partners are still alive. Such unions are a sin, and not true marriage.

2. A marriage between two *unbaptized* persons, although not a sacrament, if contracted validly, is recognized valid by the Church, and is indissoluble. In the case of a marriage between two unbaptized persons, if one were later baptized in the Church, the marriage can be dissolved by the **"Pauline privilege."**

The conditions are: if the unbaptized party refuses to live with the Catholic, or to dwell peacefully with the Catholic, the baptized one may have the marriage dissolved and be free to marry a Christian. This power of the Church is based on St. Paul: "If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to live with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he consents to live with her, let her not put away her husband. . . . But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart. For a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).

What is necessary to receive the sacrament of Matrimony worthily?—To receive the sacrament of Matrimony worthily, it is necessary to be in the state of grace, to know the duties of married life, and to obey the marriage laws of the Church.

1. The parties to a marriage should be in the state of grace, because matrimony is a *sacrament of the living*. They should receive Holy Communion at their Nuptial Mass, to implore God's blessing on their union.

As matrimony is an important step, the contracting parties should make a *general confession* of their whole lives, as a fitting preparation for the responsibilities of their new state. If matrimony is received in a state of mortal sin, the sacrament is truly received, but the graces it brings are suspended.

2. The contracting parties should understand well the ***purpose*** of the state which they are about to enter. The first purpose of God in instituting matrimony was to populate the earth, and raise up souls who would fill heaven with saints. He said to Adam and Eve: "Increase and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28).

In matrimony a man and his wife take part in the work of the Creator, giving life to a deathless soul. If the married would ponder this fact, they surely would not neglect their duties towards their children, to "rear them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). "As the sapling is bent, so is the tree inclined. "Even wild beasts take the utmost care of their young, but certain modern parents in the pursuit of amusements neglect the proper upbringing of their offspring.

What are the chief effects of the sacrament of Matrimony?—The chief effects of the sacrament of Matrimony are:

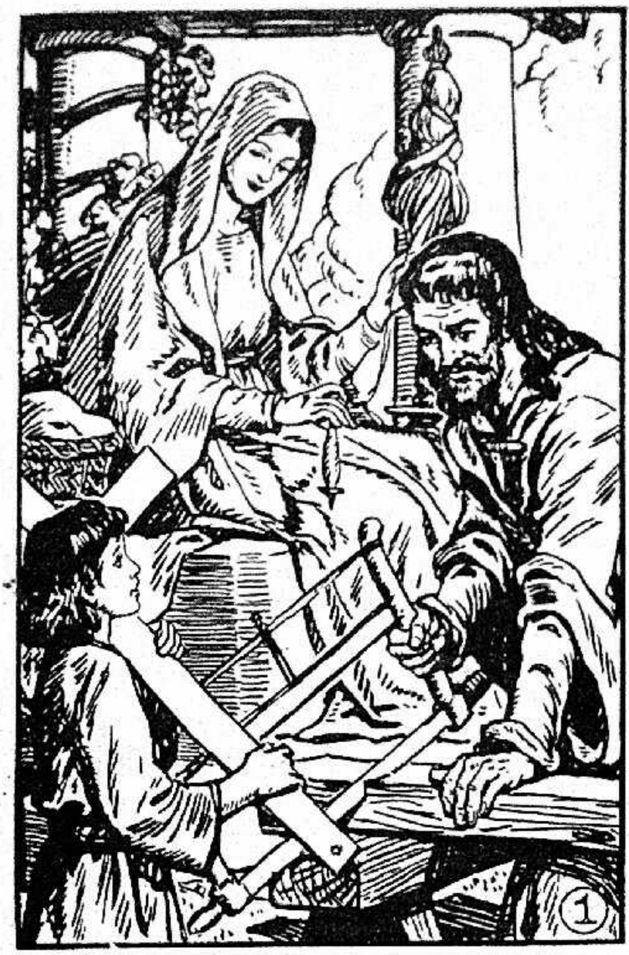
1. An increase of sanctifying grace.

Matrimony is a sacrament of the living and must be received in the state of grace. But it increases the *sanctifying grace* already possessed by the recipient, so that he becomes more pleasing to God.

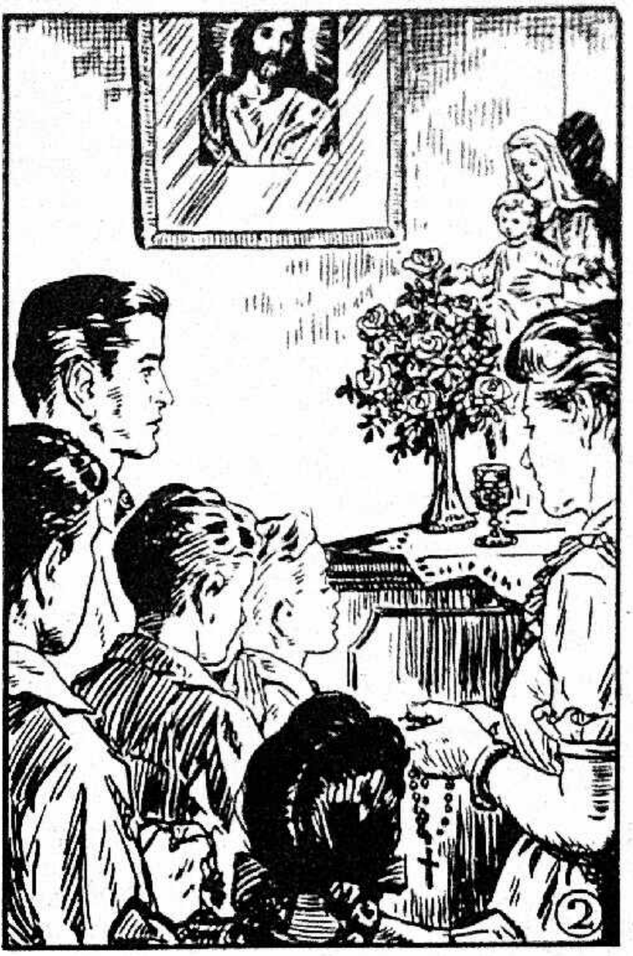
2. The special help of God for husband and wife to love each other faithfully, to bear with each other's faults, and to bring up their children properly. This is the special *sacramental grace* obtained from the reception of the sacrament of Matrimony.

Besides the aim of bringing children into the world, God also instituted marriage for the ***mutual support*** of husband and wife. Before Eve was created, God said: "It is not good for man to be alone; let Us make him a help like unto himself" (Gen. 2:18). In Matrimony grace is needed—and grace given—for the proper exercise of its many functions: the begetting and bringing up of children, mutual exchange of love, fidelity, and comfort, maintenance of the family. For all these and other duties of the married, Matrimony is an unending source of grace.

God created Eve's body from the body of Adam. This was to show the perfect equality and union that should exist between husband and wife, who by marriage become "two in one flesh."



1. *Every Catholic family should have the Holy Family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, as their model, and live in holiness and mutual love.*



2. *Every family should preserve the custom of having family prayers at some hour of the morning or evening, praying as one, in a unity of worship.*

164. Duties of Married Life

What is the chief duty of husband and wife in the married state?—The chief duty of husband and wife in the married state is to be faithful to each other, and to provide in every way for the welfare of the children God may give them.

1. Husband and wife must *comfort and support* each other in the activities of their common life, in the fulfillment of their duties individual as well as mutual, in all important matters, both spiritual and material. "Now they are no longer two, but one flesh" (Matt. 19:6).

The *wife* needs the husband to lean upon; the *husband* needs his wife to comfort and care for him. The man is the breadwinner and the head; the wife is the queen and mother. In true Christian marriage there is no question of selfishness, competition, or superiority between the spouses, for they two are "one flesh."

2. Husband and wife must be faithful to their marriage vows; they owe *fidelity* to each other. They ought very carefully to avoid even the appearance of unfaithfulness, for where jealousy is awakened, conjugal felicity ends. They should bear with each other's faults and infirmities, and not ruin their home life by dissensions.

The wife will influence her husband for good more effectually by silence, meekness, and prayer, than by nagging and scandalous scolding. The husband should remember that his wife also needs companionship; he should not long be away.

3. The spouses should always live together, and have a real *Christian family life*. They must however remember that all marital relations must be in accord with divine and natural law in the "faithfulness of chastity."

Their affection should not be purely human, but holy and supernatural, in accordance with the purpose of their state, which was instituted by God. "For we are the children of saints: and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God" (Job. 8:5).

4. For its *type and model,* marriage has the Mystical Union between Christ and His Church. The husband should love his wife *as Christ loves the Church,* with a holy and supernatural love, as his own self. The wife should love and obey her husband as the head of the family.

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church" (Eph. 5:25). "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is becoming in the Lord" (Col. 3:19). In explaining the meaning of this latter passage, Pius XI in his Encyclical on Christian marriage says: "This subjection does not take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; or does it bid her obey her husband's every request, even if not in harmony with right reason or the dignity due her as a wife. . . . But it forbids that exaggerated liberty which cares not for the good of the family; it forbids that in this body which is the family, the heart be separated from the head, to the great detriment of the whole body, and the proximate danger of ruin. *For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, she ought to claim for herself the chief place in love."*

What are the duties of the married as parents?—It is the grave obligation of parents to provide for their children and to train them in the love and fear of God. (*See also pages* 208-209, *"Duties of Parents."*)

1. The primary *purpose of marriage* is the begetting and rearing of children in the fear and love of God, in order that they may join Him in heaven some day.

Since the primary purpose of marriage is to bring children into the world, any attempt to frustrate this purpose while making use of its means is instrinsically evil, against natural and divine law, and necessarily a grievous sin. This is why such procedures as birth control, abortion, sterilization, are mortal sins and violations of the sacrament.

2. Some parents are at great pains to *amass wealth* to bequeath to their children, but pay no attention to their upbringing. The best legacy they can leave their children is the love of God.

The religious training of the child depends mostly on the mother. A mother who spends her time gossiping with her neighbors, going from one social function to another, or engrossing herself in useless amusements to the neglect of her children, has much to answer for before God. How happy good parents will be when they go before God's judgment seat and are able to say: "Those whom Thou hast given me I have guarded" (John 17:12).

Is artificial birth control immoral?—Artificial birth control is immoral, contrary to both natural and divine law.

1. Artificial birth control *contravenes* the primary purpose of marriage and prostitutes it for other ends.

The practice of birth control will, if carried out to its inevitable conclusion, some day, as a sarcastic writer comments, "give over the country to the animals." In the United States the birth rate is steadily going down; it is estimated that by 1960 the population will remain stationary, then decline. One-seventh of couples are now childless.

2. God severely *punishes* even in this life those who practice "birth control." It results in sterility, vice, weakness of the will, etc., besides physical diseases.

One who tries to circumvent God cannot escape punishment, both in this life and the next. The *only* licit way of preventing birth and limiting the number of children is by not using the marital rights. If in a formal and explicit stipulation before marriage a man says to a woman (*or vice versa*): "I marry you, provided we shall have no children," this marriage is null. It is against the natural law of God, confirmed and enforced by the Church in Canon 1013, which says: "The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of offspring." If this end is wilfully excluded, there can be no marriage.

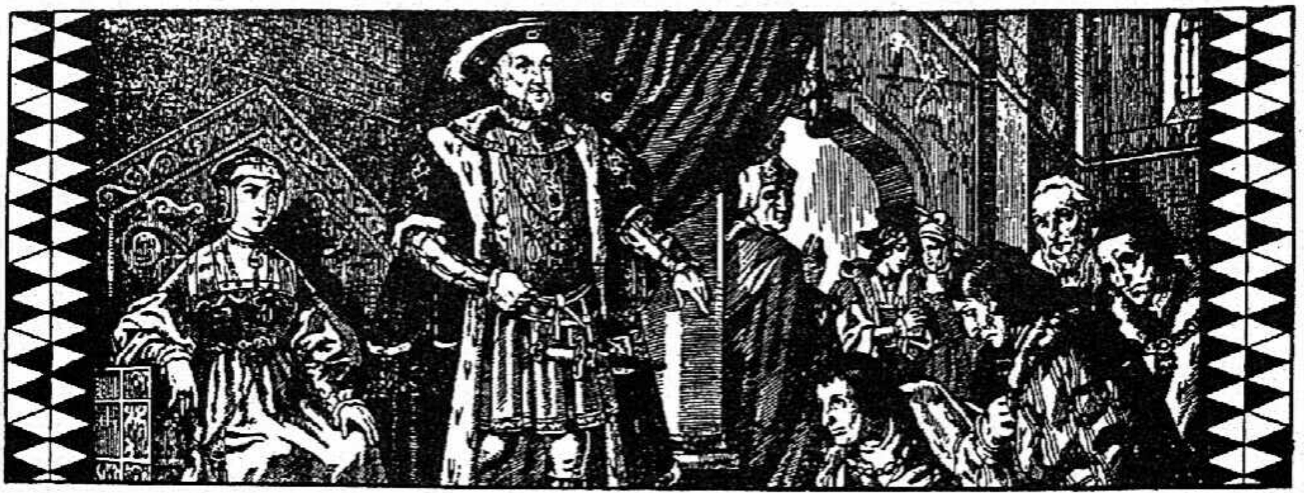
Is abortion evil?—Direct abortion is evil, a grave sin, contrary to the law of God; indirect abortion may be permitted.

1. *Direct abortion* is committed when the fetus is intentionally removed from the mother's womb before it is able to lead a separate life, even if this were done in the very earliest period of pregnancy. Direct abortion is equivalent to murder; those guilty of it, or who cooperate either physically or morally, incur excommunication.

Direct abortion cannot be permitted even to save a mother's life. If the fetus or the baby is killed purposely because by not doing so the mother might die, that is *direct abortion*. It is estimated that in this country one pregnancy in three ends in abortion.

2. *Indirect abortion* may occur when, although not intended, the death of the fetus follows some operation or other treatment performed on the mother. Such treatments and operations are permitted only when it is certain that both mother and child would otherwise die. In such cases the child must receive Baptism.

In order to be certain of circumstances, a conscientious Catholic physician should be consulted.



Henry VIII, king of England, asked the Pope to grant him a divorce from his lawful wife, Catherine of Aragon, so that he might marry Anne Boleyn. The king had rendered valuable services to the Church. If the Pope refused, England would surely be plunged in heresy.

But Pope Clement VII stood firm. Not even to save England for the Church could he break God's law. The only reply he gave was: "Non possumus; I have no authority to set aside the divine law."

As a result, Henry VIII abandoned his obedience, and intent on his evil desires and yielding to his passions, he revolted from the Church. This was the beginning of the Protestant Church of England.

165. Divorce

What is meant by the unity of the sacrament of Matrimony?—By the unity of the sacrament of Matrimony is meant that the husband cannot during the life of his wife have another wife, nor the wife during the life of her husband have another husband.

1. Christian marriage is *a union* between only *one man and one woman.* God created only one man and one woman in the beginning; and thus then there was unity in marriage.

Under the Mosaic Law divorce was in some cases permitted, to avoid greater evils, because after the Fall the primitive revelation had become obscured to men. But when Christ came, He withdrew this permission absolutely, and restored marriage to its original unity, saying:

"Have you not read that the Creator, from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? Therefore now they are no longer two, but one flesh. *What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. . . .* Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives; but it was not so from the beginning" (Matt. 19:4-8).

2. Christian marriage is a sacred and holy state pleasing to God. St. Paul compares it to the *mystical union* between Christ and His Church. As Christ is one, and the Church is one, so marriage is between one man and one woman. As Christ and the Church are inseparably united, so marriage is indissoluble. It makes the contracting parties "two in one flesh."

St. Paul said: "This is a great mystery—I mean in reference to Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:32). Christ is the head of the Church; so is the man the head of the wife. The Church is subject to Christ; so must the wife be obedient to her husband. Christ never abandons the Church, and the Church is always faithful to Christ; so a man and his wife must be faithful to each other.

3. The important object of marriage is to provide for the proper upbringing of *children.* This could not be attained if divorce were permitted.

What would become of the children if the parents were free to separate at their leisure? Court records show that many youthful criminals come from the broken homes of divorced parents. Divorce destroys the family and will some day, if not arrested, destroy the State.

4. If the indissoluble character of Matrimony is well understood, even should—as may often happen—husband and wife disagree, their tendency would be to make up, not to rush to the divorce court.

The preservation of the sacred character of marriage is vital to society; give in to divorce, and *destruction* of all social life will come. Divorce is a breach in the wall of civilization, a destructive force in morality. Today two out of five marriages in our country end in divorce. Beginning with causes of adultery, now in many places divorce can be obtained on almost any grounds; it has become only an excuse to change partners. Is that Matrimony?

What is divorce?—Divorce is a legal separation of married persons; as generally understood today, it is a complete severance of the marriage bond giving the parties the right to marry other persons.

1. Our Lord lifted marriage from the natural to the supernatural level, making of it a holy sacrament. And this *consummated sacramental marriage* can ***never be dissolved,*** except by the death of one of the parties; there can never be such a thing approved by the Church as divorce.

The marriage of unbaptized persons is not sacramental, though it may be valid. The valid marriage of two baptized persons is *always sacramental,* whether they be Catholics or non-Catholics. For this reason the valid marriage of two baptized non-Catholics performed in the authorized manner is always a sacrament. This is easily understood when we remember that neither pastor nor official is the minister of the sacrament of Matrimony; they do not really confer the sacrament. The contracting parties are themselves the ministers, and confer the sacrament upon each other.

2. ***Christ*** definitely and strictly forbade the cutting, the breaking of the marriage bond. Nobody can misinterpret His meaning: "Everyone who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries a woman who has been put away from her husband commits adultery" (Luke 16:18).

" 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' Therefore now they are no longer two, but one flesh. *What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder*" (Mark 10: 7-9).

3. The bond of the sacrament of matrimony lasts until the death of husband or wife. Christian marriage is *indissoluble,* except by death. Divorce—that is, the breaking of the marriage bond, with the right to *remarry*—is ***never*** permitted. By the law of God, the bond uniting husband and wife can be dissolved only by death.

"And he said to them: . . . 'Whoever puts away his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if the wife puts away her husband and marries another, she commits adultery' " (Mark 10:11-12). "Everyone who puts away his wife, save on account of immorality, causes her to commit adultery; and he who marries a woman who has been put away commits adultery" (Matt. 5-32).

4. No power on earth can break a Christian marriage. The indissolubility of marriage is not a law ordained by the Church, but by God. The Church ***cannot and will not tamper with the laws of God.*** As St. Paul said:

"To those who are married, ***not I, but the Lord,*** commands that a wife is not to depart from her husband, and if she departs, that she is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not a husband put away his wife" (Cor. 7:10, 11).

5. Not even to avert the most serious *calamities* can the Church sanction divorce.

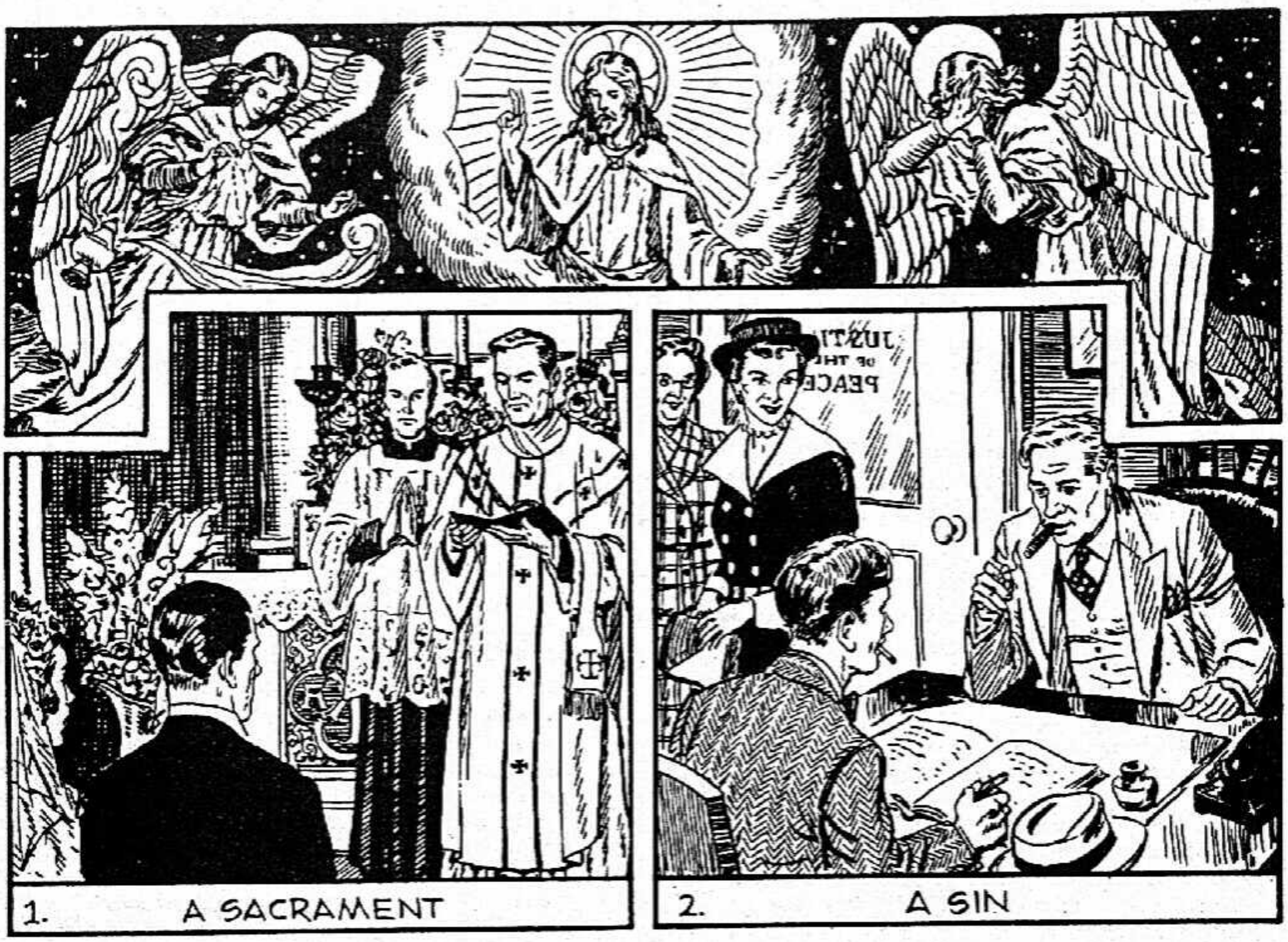
When Nicholas I was Pope, the King of Lorraine, Lothaire II, had the Emperor Louis send an army to Rome to frighten Pope Nicholas into giving him a divorce from his wife. But the Pope did not grant the divorce.

Napoleon the Great appealed to Pope Pius VII to annul the marriage which his brother Jerome had contracted with Miss Patterson of Baltimore. The Pope sent the following reply after minute investigation: "Your Majesty will understand that upon the information thus far received by Us, it is not in Our power to pronounce a sentence of nullity. We cannot utter a judgment in opposition to the rules of the Church, and We could not, without laying aside those rules, decree the invalidity of a union which, according to the Word of God, no human power can sunder."

6. *A non-consummated* marriage between two baptized persons, or between one baptized and another unbaptized, is dissolved either by the solemn religious profession of either party, or by papal dispensation for very grave cause.

In contrast to the attitude of the Popes on divorce was the action taken by the Protestant "reformers," Luther, Melanchthon, etc., when Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, wished to have two wives at the same time. For sixteen years Philip had been married to Christiana, daughter of the Duke of Saxony, and the couple had been blessed with several children. Soon after the Protestant outbreak, Philip became attracted to Margaret Saal, a maid of honor in his household. He did not, however, apply for a divorce from the Protestant leaders, but wished them to sanction another marriage, so that he might have two wives, Christiana and Margaret, at one and the same time.

The Protestant "reformers" gave this answer to Philip: "If Your Highness is resolved to marry a second wife, we judge that it should be done privately. . . . Thus all opposition and scandal will be avoided. Still, we ought not to be anxious about what the world will say, provided the conscience is at rest. Thus we approve of it, and Your Highness has, in this writing, our approbation."



The illustration (1) shows a couple being married before a priest, with two witnesses. This is the only true marriage for Catholics; it is a sacrament, (2) shows a bad marriage; for Catholics it is not a sacrament, but a mere contract before civil authorities. If one or both of the parties are Catholics, a marriage contracted only in accordance with the civil laws is invalid, null and void. The State cannot make Catholics man and wife; it can only register them as such.

166. Church Laws on Marriage

Why has the Catholic Church alone the right to make laws regulating the marriages of baptized persons?—The Catholic Church alone has the right to make laws regulating the marriages of baptized persons, because the Church alone has authority over the sacraments, and over sacred matters affecting baptized persons.

1. The Church alone has *authority over holy matters*. The Church is the guardian, the custodian of the sacraments, the means of grace for men. On this account, the Church must safeguard these sacraments.

God assigned to secular governments the duty to administer material things; but to His Church He gave power and authority over spiritual matters. "Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

2. Marriage is not only a sacrament, but also a *contract*. The Church, therefore, may interfere with this contract, by laying down laws; just as the civil government rules certain civil contracts binding, or null.

What authority has the State regarding the marriages of baptized persons?—Regarding the marriages of baptized persons, the State has the authority to make laws concerning their effects that are merely civil.

1. The State may make laws about the aspects of marriage that are *purely material*, such as laws regarding the filing of the marriage contract, laws about the conjugal property, laws about income tax exemptions according to the number of children a married couple have.

"What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6). By these words Christ Our Lord restored marriage to its original unity and indissolubility; so that there is no power on earth that can dissolve a marriage that has been validly contracted and consummated. The *civil divorces* granted by the State to Christians, giving them a right to remarry *cannot be recognized* by the Church. The State has no right to legislate in contradiction to divine law.

2. Catholics should, however, obey the State laws on marriage as long as these do not *contradict* laws of God or the Church.

But if some laws are not exactly according to Catholic principles, Catholics should work to have better laws, suited to the full exercise of their religious obligations.

What is the ordinary law of the Church to be observed at the wedding of a Catholic?—The ordinary law of the Church to be observed at the wedding of a Catholic is this: A Catholic can contract a true marriage only in the presence of an authorized priest and two witnesses.

1. The laws of the Church require a Catholic to be married in the presence of the *parish priest,* or the bishop of the diocese, or a priest delegated by either of them, and before *two witnesses.* Catholics are absolutely prohibited from contracting marriage except before a priest of the Church and two witnesses.

There is only ***one exception*** to this law. If the pastor, or the bishop, or the priest delegated by either, cannot be had without great inconvenience:

(a) In *danger of death* marriage may be contracted validly and licitly before two witnesses; even if there is no danger of death the same may be done, provided it is forseen that the above condition will last *for a month.* Thus the couple are truly married and receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.

The action should be written down, signed, and the document given to the bishop or pastor when he comes. No Catholics should take this unusual step except for an extraordinarily grave reason.

(b) If any other priest is available, even if he is not the pastor or the coadjutor, he must be called to assist at the marriage; but the marriage is valid even if contracted befor the two witnesses alone.—(*Canon 1098*).

2. No Catholic can be married *outside the Church.* Catholics who go through the form of marriage before a justice of the peace are ***not married.***

They have merely made a civil contract. Therefore, if they live together as man and wife, they sin against the Sixth and Ninth Commandments. Their legal contract may save them from jail, but it will not save them from hell. If they have children, these are registered as *illegitimate* in the baptismal records.

3. If Catholics attempt to marry before a *non-Catholic minister,* they not only commit sin, but they are excommunicated from the Church. They are ***not married.***

They are excluded from the sacraments, may not be godparents for baptism and confirmation, and may not receive Christian burial. Their excommunication lasts until they go to confession, receive absolution from the bishop, and get married before a Catholic priest, if they are to live as spouses.

4. A priest in his own diocese may perform the marriage ceremony *outside his own parish* only with the permission of the parish priest or bishop of the place.

A priest in his own parish, or a bishop in his own diocese, may marry persons not resident therein, with the permission of their pastor or bishop. A Catholic who has dwelt within the limits of a certain parish *for a month* is considered as belonging to it; also if he has a real place of abode in it, with the intention of remaining.

When does the Church declare a separation of a validly married couple?—The Church declares a separation of a validly married couple for very grave cause, such as adultery, heresy, threats on the life of either, etc.

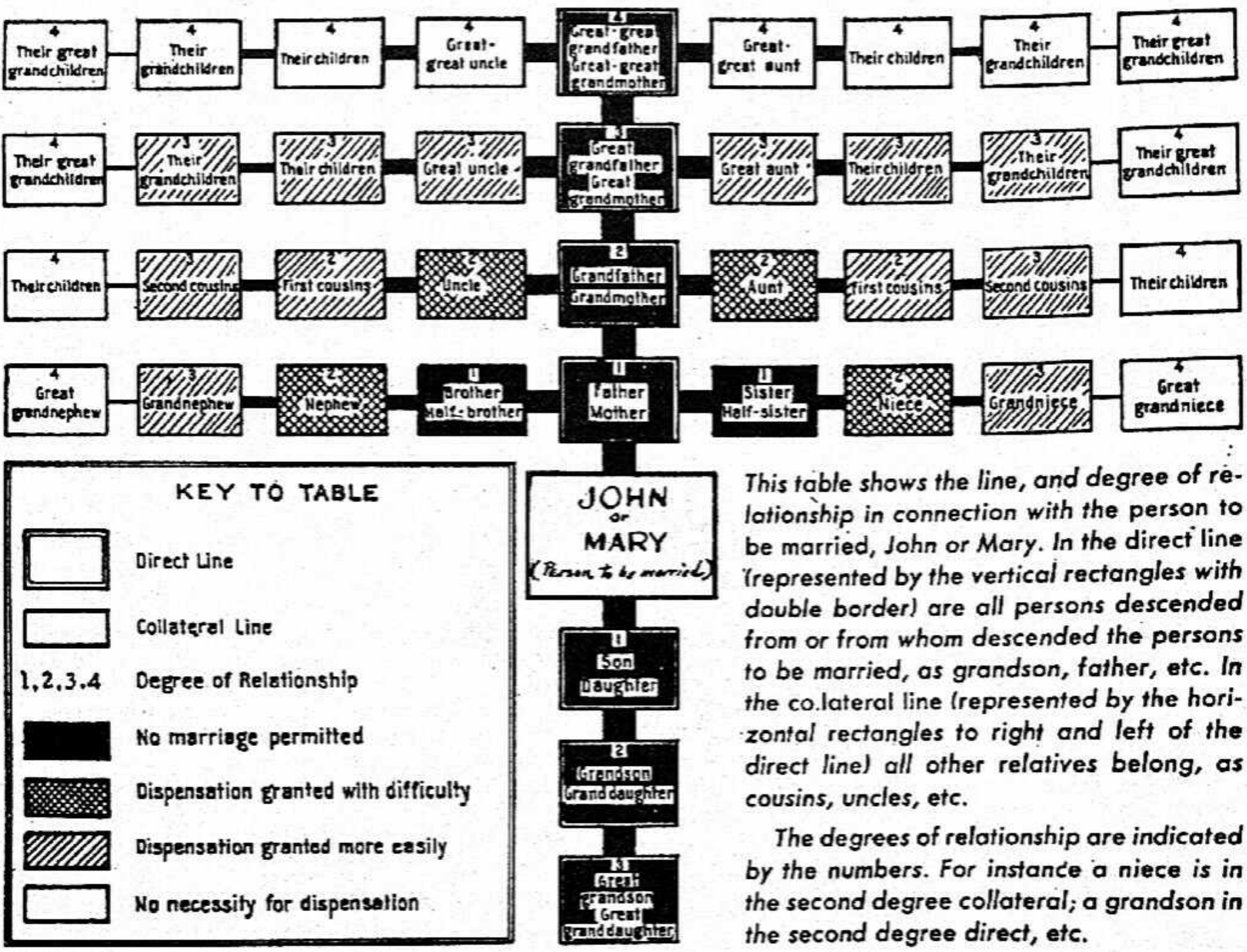
1. The separation declared by the Church *does not cut* the valid marital bond; neither of the parties may marry again till the death of the other. Should the cause cease, they must live together again.

The wronged party should obtain the sanction of the bishop before separation. The need of separation will rarely arise when both husband and wife are good practical Catholics who seriously considered the responsibilities of matrimony before embarking upon it, and who did so with prayer and the blessings of the Church. Who has trusted in God and found Him deaf to supplication?

2. The only "divorce" permitted in the Catholic Church is a *separation,* with no right to marry anyone else.

Not that the Church forces a couple who cannot agree in peace to continue living together. As far as separation includes property rights, Catholics are required to obtain ecclesiastical permission to start proceedings for a civil divorce. Once the divorce is granted, if the marriage had been a consummated sacramental bond, the contract remains in every other way; and neither of the parties can enter into marriage with another person.

TABLE OF RELATIONSHIPS


4 Their great grandchildren
4 Their grandchildren
4 Their children
4 Great-great uncle
4 Great-great grandfather Great-great grandmother
4 Great-great aunt
4 Their children
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3 Their grandchildren
3 Their children
3 Great uncle
3 Great grandfather Great grandmother
3 Great aunt
3 Their children
3 Their grandchildren
4 Their great grandchildren
4 Their children
3 Second cousins
2 First cousins
2 Uncle
2 Grandfather Grandmother
2 Aunt
2 First cousins
3 Second cousins
4 Their children
4 Great grandnephew
3 Grandnephew
2 Nephew
1 Brother Half-brother
1 Father Mother
1 Sister Half-sister
2 Niece
3 Grandniece
4 Great grandniece
JOHN or MARY (Person to be married)
1 Son Daughter
2 Grandson Granddaughter
3 Great grandson Great granddaughter
KEY TO TABLE
Direct Line
Collateral Line
1,2,3,4 Degree of Relationship
No marriage permitted
Dispensation granted with difficulty
Dispensation granted more easily
No necessity for dispensation

This table shows the line, and degree of relationship in connection with the person to be married, John or Mary. In the direct line (represented by the vertical rectangles with double border) are all persons descended from or from whom descended the persons to be married, as grandson, father, etc. In the collateral line (represented by the horizontal rectangles to right and left of the direct line) all other relatives belong, as cousins, uncles, etc.

The degrees of relationship are indicated by the numbers. For instance a niece is in the second degree collateral; a grandson in the second degree direct, etc.

167. Impediments to Matrimony

What are impediments to matrimony?—Impediments to matrimony are obstacles to the validity or lawfulness of a marriage.

1. Impediments to matrimony are certain *restrictions* imposed by the law of God or of the Church which render a marriage contract invalid or unlawful if such restrictions are violated when entering into the marriage. In safeguarding the sacrament of Matrimony, the Church declares that certain circumstances tend to lessen or actually destroy the sacred nature of the sacrament. Such *obstacles* are called *"impediments"*, since they obstruct sacramental sanctity.

Whenever circumstances incompatible with the sacrament or contract of Matrimony exist, the Church has established impediments; other reasons, such as the general welfare of society or the protection of the matrimonial bond may have caused the placing of impediments.

2. When impediments exist, the Church either completely forbids the administration of the sacrament, or requires special assurances that the dangers may be reduced as far as possible; in this latter case, a matrimonial ***"dispensation"*** is granted.

3. There are two kinds of impediments:

(a) ***Diriment*** (also called annulling or nullifying) impediments render an attempted marriage altogether null and void, invalid. Dispensations are only rarely granted for diriment impediments. Should an attempt at marriage be made without dispensation, there is ***no marriage.***

Such an invalid marriage must be either dissolved, or the impediment removed by a dispensation, and the marriage performed validly. If a marriage is dissolved, the contracting parties are free to marry other partners, if they so wish.

(b) ***Prohibitive*** (also called impedient or hindering) impediments render a marriage unlawful, *illicit, but valid.* In this case, the couple are married, though unlawfully. The marriage *cannot be dissolved.*

Prohibitive impediments are easily dispensed, but good Catholics should prefer to comply with the wishes of the Church, which put these impediments for the good of its members.

Which are the chief diriment impediments?—The chief diriment impediments are:

1. ***An existing marriage.*** One who is already married cannot marry again while the other party is still living. This impediment is *never given a dispensation.*

Should someone, believing his spouse dead, contract another marriage, he must immediately leave the second spouse if the first be discovered living.

2. ***Coercion.*** In marriage, the contracting parties must give their consent *freely.* If undue stress is brought to bear on either party, so that he is forced to marry against his will, through abduction, violence, fear of bodily injury, of being disinherited, etc. the impediment is annulling, and there is no marriage.

Parents and others who use coercion to force someone into a marriage against his will are grievously guilty before God. However, the marriage is valid if in spite of his dislike for the other party a person freely consents to marry, for other motives.

3. ***Lack of age.*** Boys under sixteen and girls under fourteen cannot enter into marriage.

4. ***Blood relationship*** or consanguinity.

The Church forbids the marriage of close relatives, in order to enforce the respect due to blood relations, and to increase the number of families bound together in friendship, thus promoting union among men. The prohibition also aims to prevent the birth of physically and mentally defective children, often found resulting from such marriages.

5. ***Close affinity.*** This means relationship by marriage. The survivor cannot marry the blood relations of his dead spouse.

In the *direct* line, as a stepdaughter or mother-in-law, no dispensation is granted. In the *collateral line* the impediment extends to the second degree, and may be dispensed.

6. ***Holy orders or solemn vows.*** Men who have received major orders, monks and nuns who have taken a solemn vow of chastity, cannot contract a valid marriage.

7. ***Disparity of worship.*** This is marriage between a Catholic and an unbaptized person. It is a *diriment* impediment which, without dispensation, renders an attempted marriage invalid, null, not a marriage.

Examples of the unbaptized are: Mohammedans, Jews, Buddhists, Shintoists, infidels, etc.

8. ***Spiritual affinity.*** Without dispensation, sponsors in Baptism cannot marry their godchildren.

A lay person cannot marry the person to whom he administered lay baptism.

9. ***Legal relationship.*** Those who by civil law are incapable of contracting marriage by reason of a legal relation arising from adoption are incapable, by Church law, of a valid marriage.

This impediment partakes of the nature of the civil impediment which conditions it: it is prohibitive, where the civil impediment is prohibitive, and diriment or annulling, where the civil impediment is diriment.

10. ***Other impediments.*** There are other impediments which those who wish to get married should know. They should inquire from their pastors or confessors about these.

Among other diriment impediments are crime, error, impotency, public propriety, imbecility, and clandestinity.

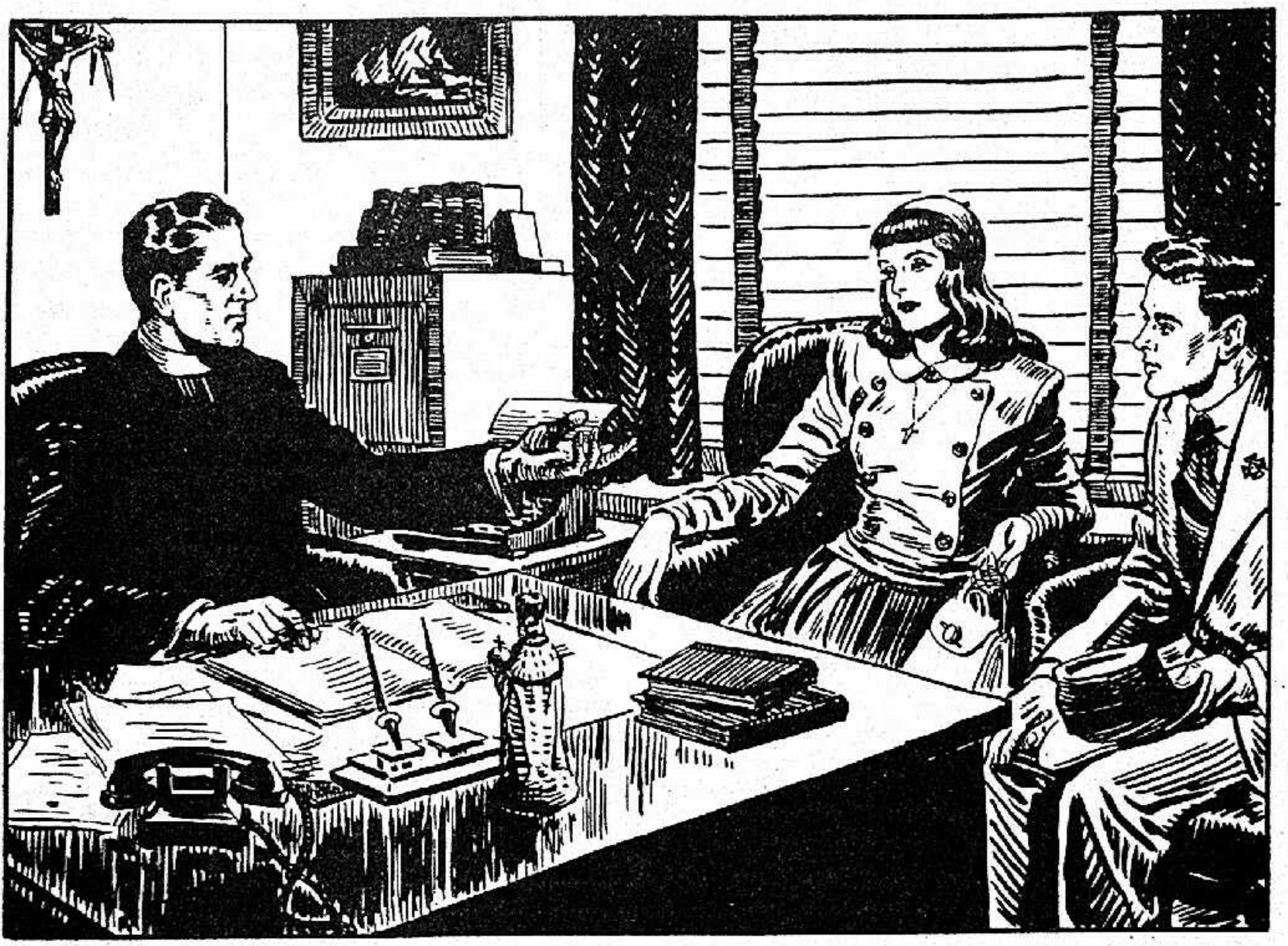
Which are the chief prohibitive impediments? — The chief prohibitive impediments are:

1. ***Forbidden times*** (*see page* 349).

2. ***Simple vows.*** Simple vows of virginity, chastity or celibacy, a vow to enter a religious order or become a priest, are impediments.

3. ***Mixed religion.*** The marriage of a Catholic to a baptized non-Catholic is a *prohibitive* impediment. Being valid, the marriage cannot be dissolved. With a dispensation, all requirements of the Church are complied with, all illicitness is removed.

Non-Catholics can marry validly among themselves, since the Church enforces its laws only among these under its care. If baptized non-Catholics marry validly, their marriage cannot be dissolved.



The contracting parties should go before the priest for instruction before a projected marriage. Should there be any impediment, arrangements should be made for a dispensation. This should be done at least a month before the ceremony, to allow time for the marriage preparations.

168. Dispensations from Matrimonial Impediments

Does the Church have the authority to excuse or grant dispensations from all impediments?—The Church does not have the authority to excuse or grant dispensations from all impediments; it can grant dispensations only from such impediments as arise from its own laws, but not from such as arise from divine or natural laws.

Impediments of the *natural law*, which is only part of the divine law, are unchangeable, and ***cannot*** be given any dispensation. An example is the marriage of parents and children, or of a married person whose spouse is still living.

1. Dispensations are granted when there is *sufficient reason or need*. The bishop and the parish priest have the authority to investigate each case.

Not all impediments are granted dispensation with equal ease. Prohibitive impediments are more easily granted dispensations than diriment ones. Very rarely can a dispensation be obtained from solemn vows or from major orders, when one of the contracting parties is unbaptized, or when the proposed marriage is between such close blood relations as uncle and niece, aunt and nephew.

2. In order to *discourage* unnecessary seeking after dispensations, a fee is required according to the petitioner's means. These fees help to maintain the matrimonial courts established to safeguard marriage.

Matrimonial dispensations are granted (a) in favor of a contemplated marriage, or (b) to legitimize one already contracted. The poor are granted dispensations *without charge*.

Does the Church forbid Catholics to contract marriage with non-Catholics?—Yes; the Church does forbid Catholics to contract marriage with non-Catholics.

1. Such a marriage is called a ***"mixed marriage."*** The Church forbids mixed mar-

riages because they often bring about family discord, loss of faith on the part of the Catholic, and neglect of the religious training of the children.

The Church strongly *disapproves* of mixed marriages. From its long experience, the Church knows that mixed marriages are rarely happy; they are opposed to the union and harmony that should exist between spouses. The Catholic is in danger of losing his or her faith. The non-Catholic is liable to a divorce and contract another marriage, whereas the Catholic is bound not to take a second partner until the first one dies. The proper training of the children becomes difficult; moreover, it is likely that the offspring from such unions grow up without proper religious instruction, and lose the Faith.

2. For mixed marriages, a dispensation is granted only for grave cause, and under the condition of a promise (as a rule, in writing): by the non-Catholic party not to endanger the faith of the Catholic; by the Catholic party to strive for the conversion of the non-Catholic by prayer and good example; and by both parties to have all children born of the marriage baptized and reared as true Catholics.

The divine law forbids mixed marriages as long as there is danger to the faith of the Catholic or of the offspring. This danger has to be removed before dispensation is granted; hence the definite and explicit promises required.

3. The Church shows its *disapproval* of mixed marriages even after a dispensation has been granted. Sacred functions, such as the Nuptial Mass and Blessing, are forbidden; the banns are not published. The bishop may permit some ceremonies.

The ceremony cannot take place in the church, but in the sacristy or convent, except with a very special permission from the bishop. Even with the permission, all vestments and blessings, as well as the Nuptial Mass, are omitted.

Does the Church allow Catholics to marry during Lent and Advent? — The Church allows Catholics to marry during Lent and Advent, provided they do so quietly and without much ceremony; a Nuptial Mass is forbidden during these seasons.

1. It is an error to think that the Church prohibits the contracting of marriage on any day of the year. It merely prohibits *celebrations* or signs of rejoicing that do not harmonize with the spirit of the penitential seasons. A marriage may take place without the Nuptial Mass and blessing any day in the year.

It is forbidden to have the *Nuptial Mass and blessing* during the closed times which are seasons of penance; that is, from the first Sunday of Advent till Christmas Day inclusive, and from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday inclusive. This is what is meant by the prohibition to *"solemnize"* weddings.

2. Good Catholics should avoid setting the *date* of their marriage during the closed seasons of Advent and Lent, out of a desire to be united with the spirit of the Church. It is rather thoughtless to have worldly public celebrations at a period when Mother Church is in penitential garb. Besides, if Catholics realized the value and beauty of a Nuptial Mass, which is not said during the penitential seasons, they would hesitate to have it omitted for that memorable day of their marriage.

Even when, with a dispensation, the Nuptial Mass and Blessing are granted during the "closed seasons," still the occasion is supposed to be carried out quietly, without pompous celebrations: this, too many Christians violate in the form of grand receptions and dances in Advent and Lent.

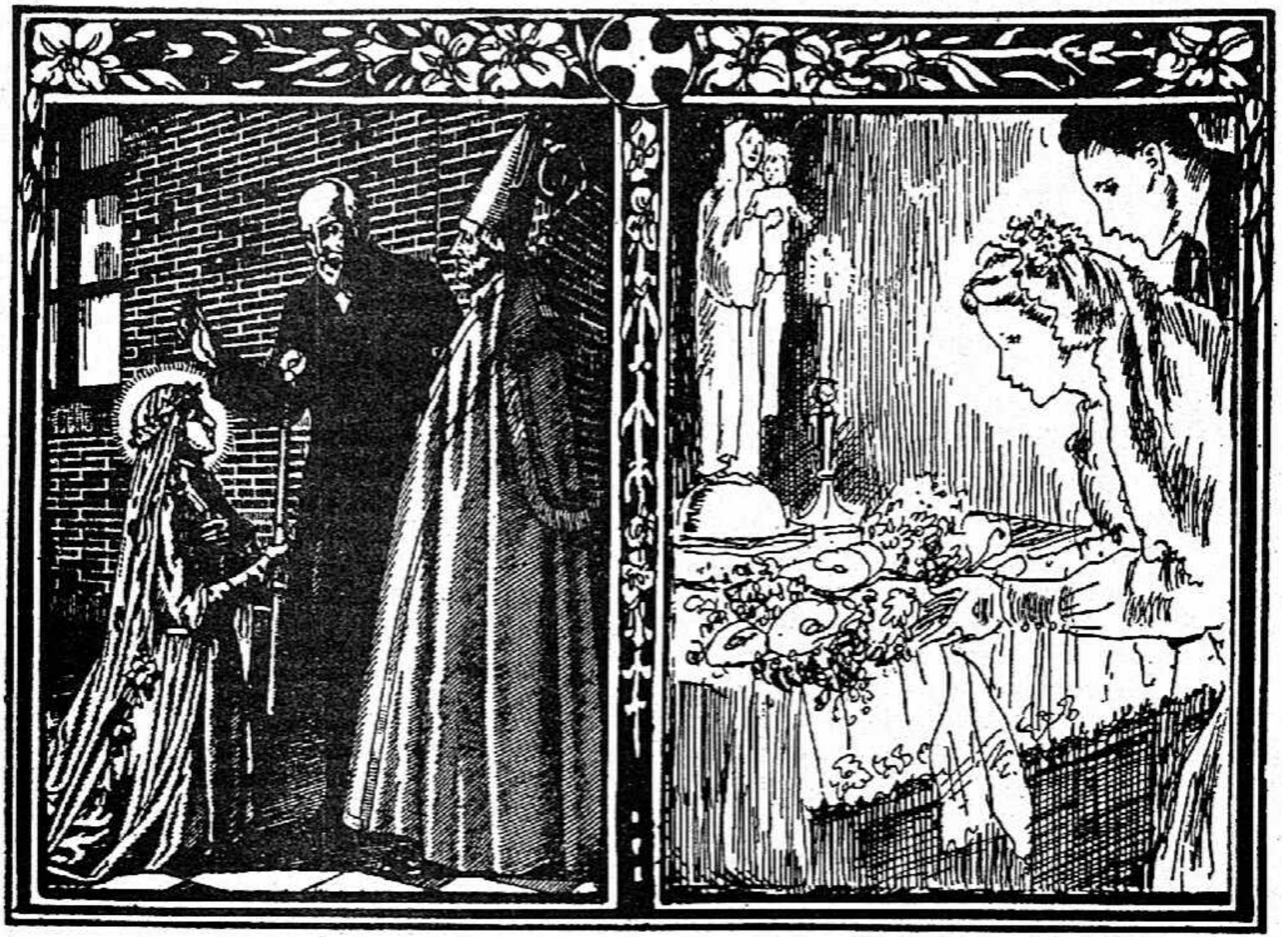
When does the Church declare a marriage null?—The Church declares a marriage null when, after detailed investigation, the facts prove that from the very beginning there had been no marriage; there had been no validity.

Nullity declares that ***no** marital bond* had ever existed; this is not to be confounded with divorce, which is a juridical act cutting an existing and valid marital bond.

When a marriage is annulled, since therefore there has been *no real matrimony*, the parties to the invalid contract are set free to marry other partners; or they may regularize the marriage by a valid ceremony. When the Church annuls a marriage, declaring it invalid, the parties may apply for a civil divorce, with the permission of the ordinary.

What should Catholics do to prepare for a holy and happy marriage?—To prepare for a holy and happy marriage, Catholics should:

first, pray that God may direct their choice;
second, seek the advice of their parents and confessors;
third, practice the virtues, especially chastity;
fourth, frequently receive the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.



It is a sin for parents to discourage, oppose, or prevent their child's lawful desire to choose a state of life for himself. The first picture shows the father of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, giving her his blessing before she entered Carmel. Parents whose children have a religious vocation should imitate this good father. And those whose children choose to enter the married state should bless them likewise, as Our Blessed Mother must surely be blessing the newly-wedded pair above, who offer the bridal bouquet at her feet. Their preparatory period of courtship was ruled by prudence.

169. Courtship and Engagement

What is the purpose of courtship? – Courtship is a time of preparation for marriage, the time of choosing a life partner; it requires prudence and wisdom.

1. It is only when young persons have reached the *proper age* and are so situated as to be *able to bear the responsibilities* of the married state, that courtship should engage their attention. Then the young man and woman may frequent each other's company, in order to discover whether they would make suitable companions for life.

Boys and girls *still in school* should devote their time to their studies and such things appropriate to their age, as games and innocent entertainments. It is altogether out of place for young people to neglect their studies in order to waste their time in boy-and-girl affairs that at best end in nothing.

2. It is perfectly proper for a young man to pay his attentions to several young women at the same time, and for a young woman to receive such attentions from several young men at the same time. This is precisely because courtship is the *time of choosing*, to discover who will make the most suitable partner for life.

Courtship should be carried on without secrecy; young women should beware of men who keep their "love affairs" a secret.

3. The *length* of the period of courtship should be between six months and two years, no longer. Marriage is a serious and sacred responsibility, and should not be rushed into under the influence of a physical attraction or passion. But courtship,

when the prospective partners are so often in each other's company, should not be greatly prolonged, to avoid possible serious consequences.

"Marry in haste, repent at leisure," says a wise adage. Runaway marriages are generally scandalous, even sinful; at any rate they are strong temptations to sin. And so are prolonged courtships.

What should guide the choice during courtship?—One should make sure that the person he or she wishes to marry is *a practical Catholic,* and possesses the character to make a good companion and helper in life.

1. The person chosen should have the mental and spiritual *qualifications* necessary for the permanent partnership, the dispositions to harmonize with the prospective partner's.

If young people will remember that marriage is *for life,* they will exercise greater prudence in courtship. With that prudence, by the grace of God, a man can surely find a partner of whom can be said: "She is a help like to himself, and a pillar of rest" (Ecclus. 36:26).

2. One can better judge the character and virtues of a future spouse at *church* and in the *home* than on the floor in ball-rooms. The advice, "Choose your partner at the communion rail" is very sound.

An accomplished young lady was engaged to marry a prominent young man. The day before the wedding, a party was given at the house of the young lady. The conversation turned towards religion; the young man spoke with open contempt of all beliefs, boasting that he was an "open-minded" person of the 20th century and free from all "medieval notions" and "priest-invented" ceremonials.

The young lady, shocked beyond measure, gently protested, begging him not to speak in such a manner. But he laughed at her, saying that he meant every word he said and more, and that she would soon enough unlearn her "religious nonsense".

The young lady then said, "I cannot marry a man who does not respect God and religion, for he surely will not respect his wife." Thus the engagement was broken, and a worthy young lady freed from a life that would have been an agony and a danger for her.

3. It is wrong and foolish to marry for beauty, riches, or honors alone. We should rather seek, and chiefly seek, the quality of the person's soul.

After all, beauty, riches, and honors pass quickly. They may even be lost on the day of the marriage. But a good soul is beautiful in the sight of God and lives forever.

What is engagement, or betrothal?—Engagement, or betrothal, is a mutual promise of marriage, implying marriage at an early date.

An engagement should not last longer than a few months. As soon as the promise to marry is made, a definite date for the wedding should be set.

1. It is the duty of young people to *consult their parents* about their marriage. In cases where parents are extraordinarily unreasonable, young people should consult their confessor about the matter.

Generally, the parents are right about the good or bad prospects of a proposed marriage.

2. The engagement may be formally entered into by a *contract* in writing signed by both parties, with the parish priest or Bishop, or two others, as witnesses. Such a formal engagement has the force of a civil contract.

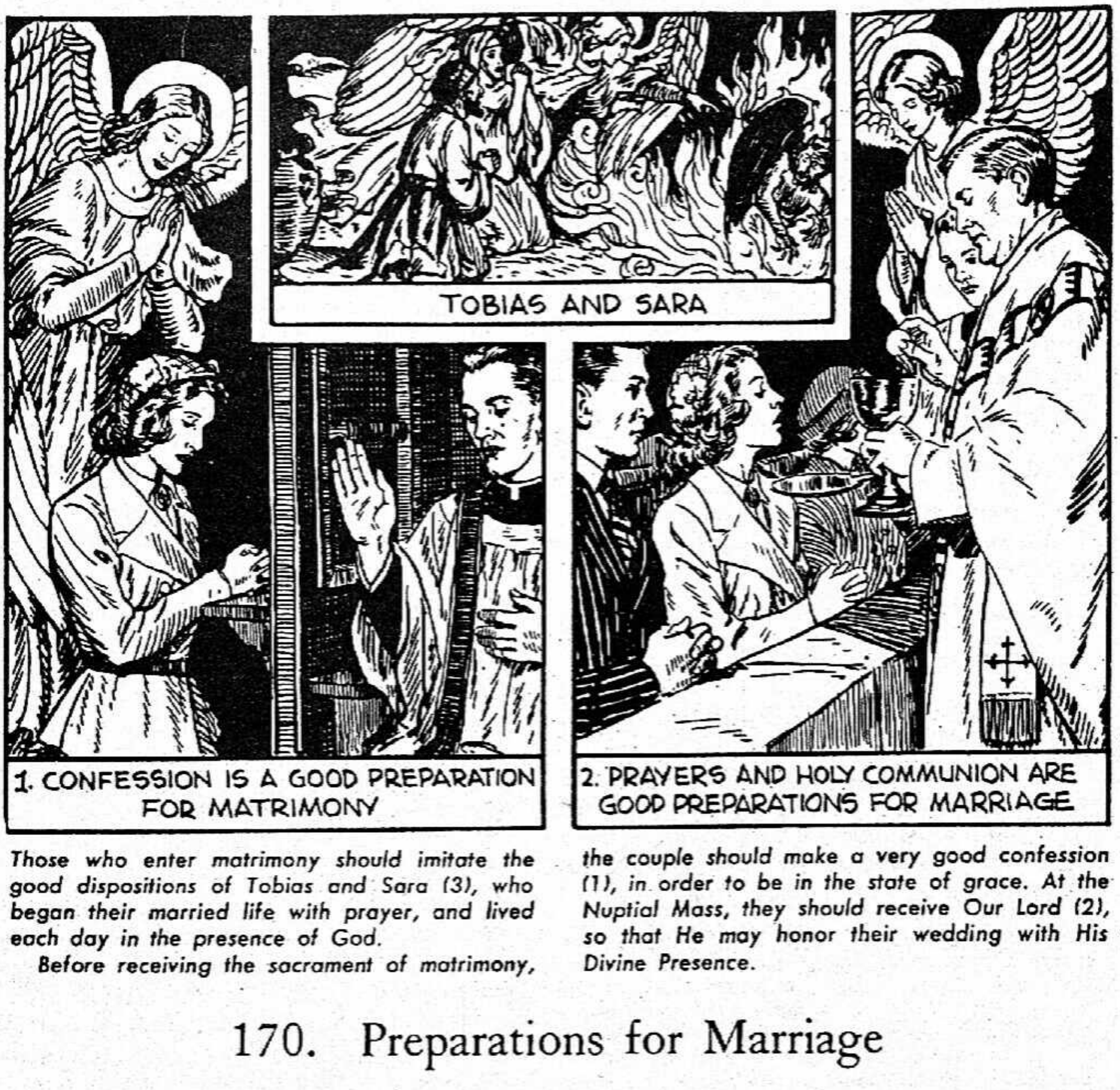
Although such formalities of betrothal are rare in our days, and there is no strict necessity for them, they should be encouraged, especially in cases where hasty alliances are feared.

3. During both the courtship and the engagement, the couple should respect each other's *virtue,* and avoid undue familiarities; this is a pledge of a chaste and happy married life. The best preservative of virtue is God Himself; and so those preparing for marriage should frequent the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist.

Everything between an engaged couple should be aboveboard. They should reveal to each other frankly everything pertaining to their financial status, social relations, and matters related to health. In this way they prevent future quarrels and misery.

4. During the interval between the engagement and the marriage, the couple should carefully *consider the step* they are about to take, and make good preparation for their wedded life, by frequently imploring God's blessing.

As the engagement should not be hastily entered into, so it should not be rashly broken. Still, if after some time either party becomes seriously convinced that the marriage would be a mistake, the engagement should be broken off. Human respect or other considerations should not be permitted to jeopardize future happiness.


TOBIAS AND SARA
1. CONFESSION IS A GOOD PREPARATION FOR MATRIMONY
2. PRAYERS AND HOLY COMMUNION ARE GOOD PREPARATIONS FOR MARRIAGE

Those who enter matrimony should imitate the good dispositions of Tobias and Sara (3), who began their married life with prayer, and lived each day in the presence of God.

Before receiving the sacrament of matrimony, the couple should make a very good confession (1), in order to be in the state of grace. At the Nuptial Mass, they should receive Our Lord (2), so that He may honor their wedding with His Divine Presence.

170. Preparations for Marriage

What should a couple do who have decided to get married?—A couple who have decided to get married should separately appear, with baptismal certificate, before the parish priest of the bride, for the canonical examination.

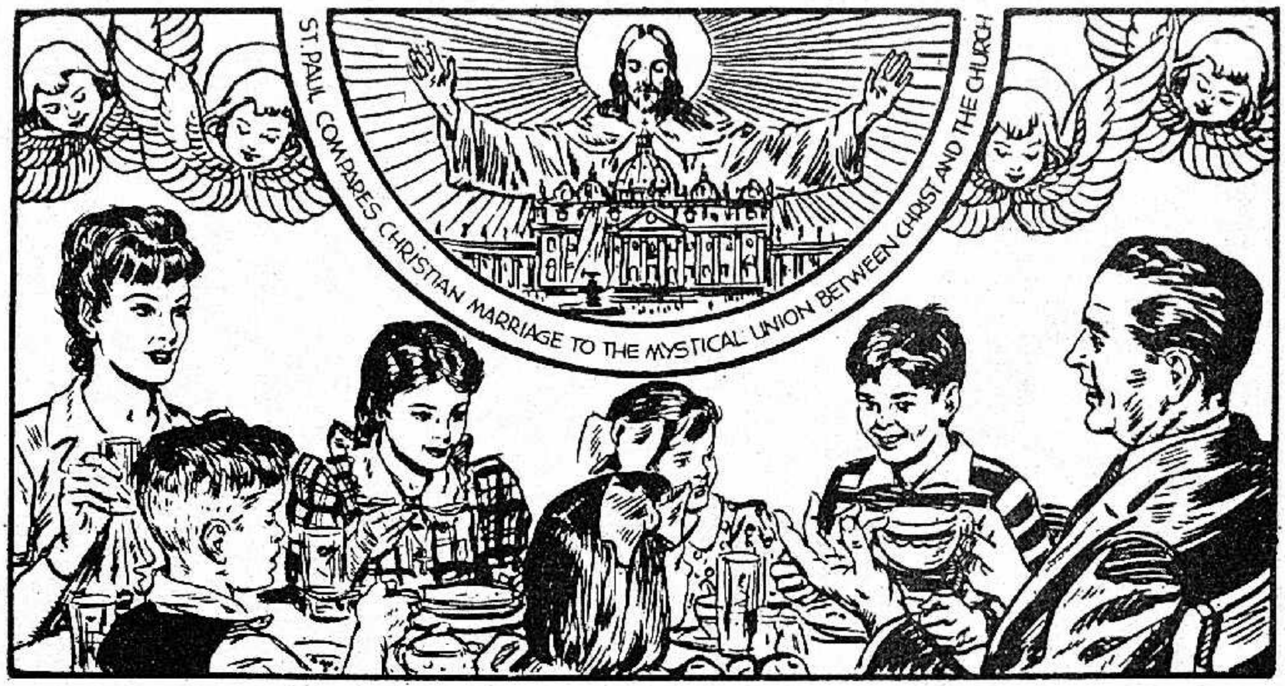
1. This should be done *about a month* before the projected marriage, to allow time for the calling of the banns. With hand on the Gospels, the contracting party swears that the truth is being told; he then replies to the questions asked by the pastor.

The main questions concern dispositions for the reception of the sacrament: the Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation of the contracting party, and impediments. Should there be any impediments, a dispensation, if possible, has to be arranged. Should there be diriment impediments that cannot be given a dispensation, the marriage cannot take place.

2. The ***canonical examination*** makes sure that the contracting parties know what they are doing, and do it of their own free will. In this way the Church shows its solicitude for its members; every possible precaution is taken in order that all may enter the state of matrimony fully prepared and safeguarded.

After the canonical examination the marriage license should be secured, and other requirements of the State complied with, such as blood tests, etc.

What are the "banns of matrimony"?—The banns of matrimony are a public proclamation of an intended marriage, made at the principal Mass on three successive Sundays or festival days, in the church or


ST. PAUL COMPARES CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE TO THE MYSTICAL UNION BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Christian marriage is a holy union, blessed by God, between one man and one woman. It is an indissoluble and pure relation, like the union between Christ and His Church.

As the priest says to the man at the end of the Toledano marriage ritual, "I give you a companion, not a servant; love her as Christ loves His Church." The union is for life, for better or worse.

churches to which the bride and groom belong.

1. The *purpose* of the banns is to discover impediments, to avoid secret marriages, and to furnish those interested an opportunity to intervene, should they wish to do so.

In this Mother Church shows its solicitude for her children, avoiding hasty marriages, doing her best to assure a holy and valid union. Dispensation from banns is granted for urgent reasons.

2. If either party has lived, after reaching canonical marriageable age, for six or more months away from the community in which the marriage is to be celebrated, the bishop may also require the publication of the banns in the other place or places.

By permission of the ordinary, the banns, instead of being read out, may be posted at the church door.

3. If anyone knows of any impediment to a proposed marriage, he is *bound in conscience* to make it known to the pastor or other clergy concerned; otherwise he is guilty of sin.

Ordinarily, the marriage ceremony is not performed till three days after the last publication of the banns.

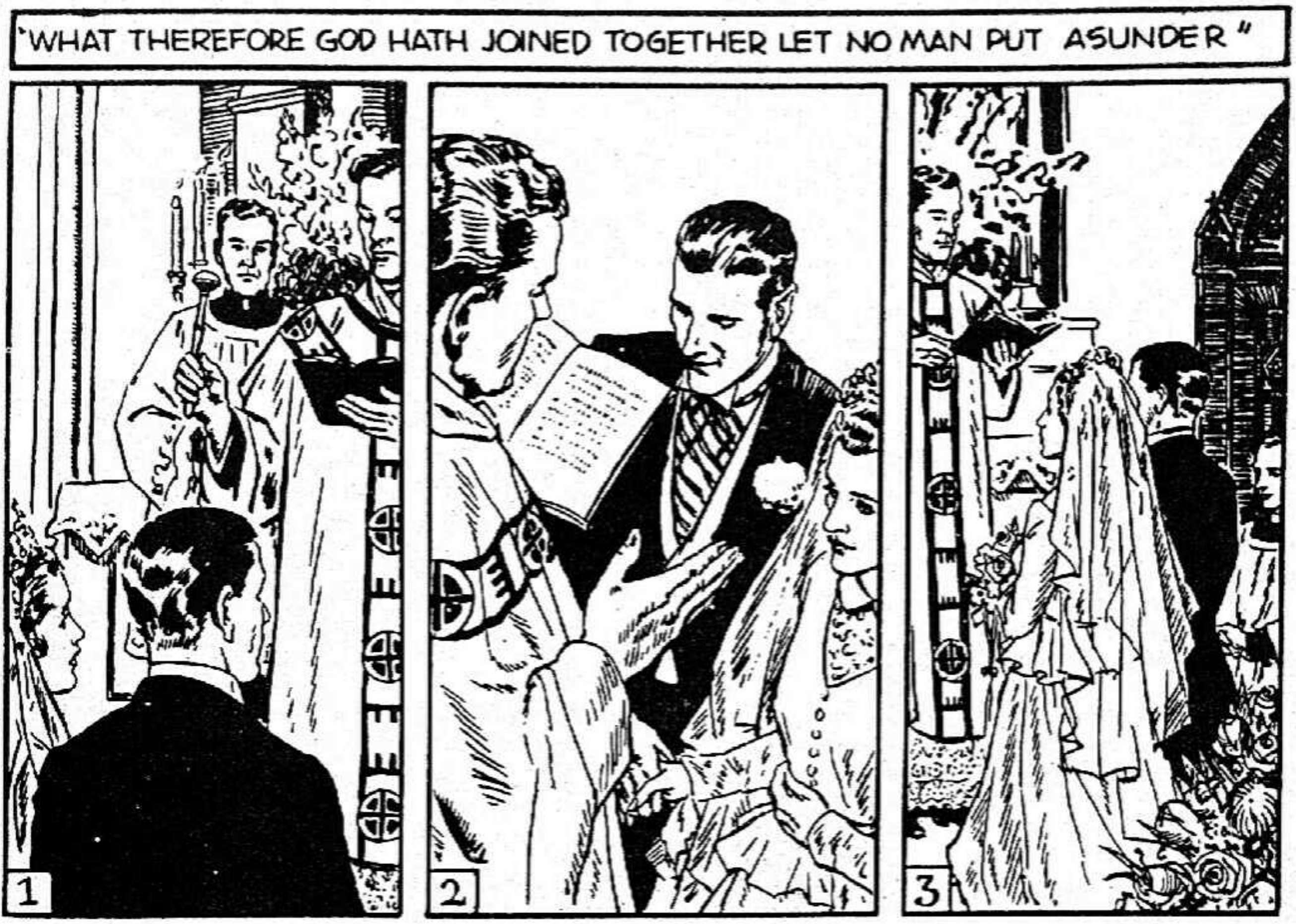
What does the marriage ceremony include?—In its fullness, the marriage ceremony includes: the nuptial contract, the nuptial Mass, and the nuptial blessing.

1. Matrimony is both a sacrament and a contract. In all other sacraments the ordinary minister is of the clergy; in Matrimony, because it is a contract, the *ministers* are the parties concerned, the bride and groom.

When the man and woman first offer themselves to each other for marriage, the first condition of a contract is fulfilled. When the offer is accepted, the second condition is fulfilled. And in the ceremony of Matrimony, when the man and woman give free and mutual consent, the contract is sealed. The contract is consummated when the rights mutually exchanged are first exercised.

2. The words in the marriage ceremony by which the man and woman express mutual consent to take each other as husband and wife constitute the *essential part* of the sacrament; they seal the marriage contract.

The priest is present only as the representative of the Church, a necessary witness for the safeguarding of the marital contract, and to implore God's blessing on the pair. He is really only the most important of the witnesses, the intermediary of Mother Church.


"WHAT THEREFORE GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER"
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The main act of the sacrament of matrimony is the expression of mutual consent. After this act the couple join hands, and the priest blesses them with holy water (1) The contracting parties hear the Nuptial Mass, receiving Holy Communion. By this act of uniting themselves with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, they invite Him to their wedding, to bless them, as the couple in Cana did long ago. During the Mass the Nuptial Blessing (3) is given. "May her wedlock be to her a yoke of love."

171. The Marriage Ceremony

What are the ceremonies of the nuptial contract?—The ceremonies of the nuptial contract are not identical throughout the Church; we here describe those used in this country, in accordance with the Roman Ritual.

1. The general practice is to have the ceremony performed at the *foot of the altar,* immediately before the celebration of Mass. The bridegroom stands to the right of the bride, with the witnesses near, facing the priest.

This is the only occasion when lay people are permitted to remain in the sanctuary; pews are prepared for groom and bride, as well as for the sponsors or witnesses, if the Mass is to be said.

2. The priest reads aloud the *instructions* on marriage. Then addressing the man by name, the priest asks: "*N*—, wilt thou take *N*— here present for thy lawful wife, according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?" The bridegroom replies: ***"I will."***

Turning to the bride, the priest asks: "*N*—, wilt thou take *N*—here present for thy lawful husband, according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?" The bride replies: ***"I will."***

This is the ***main act*** of the Sacrament. After this, even if the rest of the ceremonies are interrupted, the marriage is valid, binding.

3. At the bidding of the priest, the couple join their right hands. Then they *pledge themselves* to each other formally, repeating after the priest: "I, *N.N.*—, take thee, *N.N.*—, for my lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better,

for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part."

The priest, in Latin, pronounces the words of sanction and blessing: "I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." As he speaks, he makes over the couple the sign of the cross, then sprinkles them with holy water.

4. The priest then blesses the *ring*, a symbol of faithfulness, and sprinkles it with holy water. He gives it to the groom; who puts it on the third finger of the bride's left hand, meanwhile saying: "With this ring I thee wed, and I plight unto thee my troth."

The priest recites some versicles, and the Our Father in Latin, the couple joining in the latter prayer in their own language. Finally is said a prayer asking God's protection on those now joined in the holy bonds of Matrimony. Then, while the couple and witnesses remain in the sanctuary, the Nuptial Mass is said.

What is a Nuptial Mass?—A Nuptial Mass is a Mass which has special prayers to beg God's blessing on the married couple.

1. It is indeed most regrettable that in our country comparatively few marriages are celebrated with the ***Nuptial Mass.*** How many blessings the couple miss, when the Mass is omitted!

The afternoon and evening wedding is becoming more of a fashionable social affair than a religious ceremony. Matrimony, the great Christian Sacrament, is being turned into a civil contract. No wonder an increasing number of marriages end in divorce. Today more importance seems to be given to the festivities following the marriage ceremony than to the ceremony itself.

2. Catholics can best obtain *God's blessing* on their marriage by being married at a Nuptial Mass and by receiving Holy Communion devoutly. The Church provides a special Mass for the marriages of its members; this Nuptial Mass has special prayers begging God's blessing for the married couple. It may be said on almost any day, outside of the important feasts.

The married state needs plenty of *graces;* should not every available means be taken to obtain those graces? The Church bestows graces on the wedded pair, not only through the Sacrament, but also through the Nuptial Mass, the receiving of Holy Communion at that Mass, and the Nuptial Blessing during the Mass.

3. The Nuptial Mass is filled with beautiful excerpts from the Bible, setting forth the *sanctity* and *dignity* of the union which the man and woman have contracted. Throughout, the blessing of God is invoked.

The Gospel of the Mass is from St. Matthew: "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." The Communion is from Psalm 127: "Behold, thus shall every man be blessed who feareth the Lord; and mayest thou see thy children's children: peace upon Israel."

4. The Church *authorizes* the nuptial ceremony apart from the Nuptial Mass; but it urges all Catholics to be united in marriage with the graces of that Mass, with its beautiful liturgy.

This is why, except for grave reason, marriages should not be celebrated during Advent and Lent; for then the Nuptial Mass and blessing are forbidden. The "closed seasons" or "forbidden times" extend from the beginning of Advent till Christmas Day, and from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, inclusive. But the *celebration,* as distinguished from the *solemnization* (with full liturgy), is always permitted. If the Mass for some reason cannot be said on the day of the marriage, it should be said on the day following, or as soon as possible.

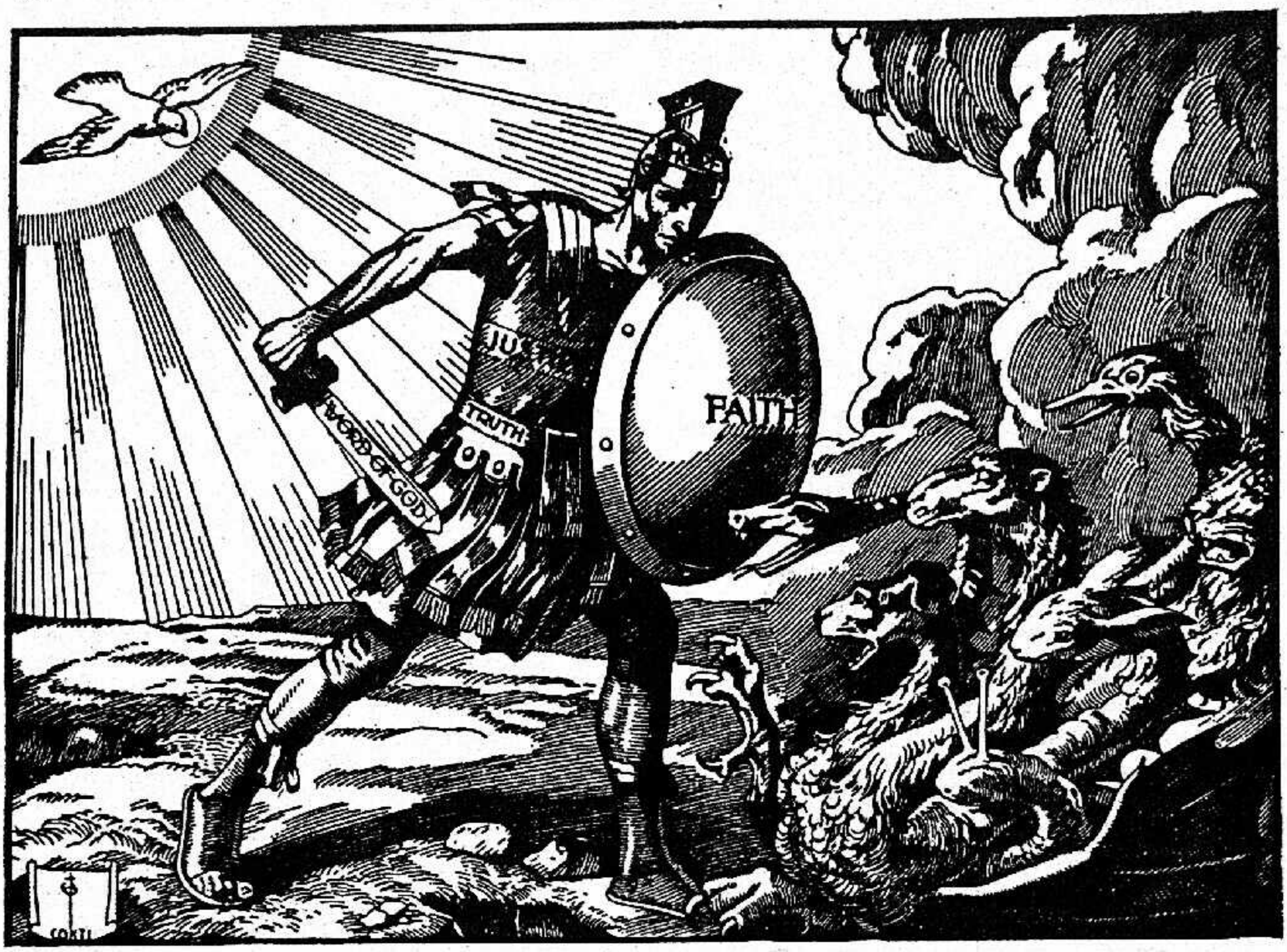
When is the Nuptial Blessing given?—The Nuptial Blessing is given during the Canon of the Mass, after the Pater Noster; it is directed rather to the woman than to the man.

1. With the True Presence before them, the priest turns, faces the couple, and imparts the ***Nuptial Blessing.*** It is of singular beauty, invoking God's grace upon the union, and praying for the bride.

Only on one other occasion (when the bishop blesses the holy oils at the Holy Thursday Mass) is the Canon of the Mass thus interrupted at its most solemn part. This is part of the prayer for the bride: "May her wedlock be to her a yoke of love and peace. Faithful and chaste, may she marry in Christ, and be an imitator of holy women. May she be amiable to her husband, like Rachel; wise, like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful, like Sara. . . . May she be fruitful in offspring, approved and innocent. . . . Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

2. The Nuptial Blessing can be received by a woman *only once.* Thus if it has been given to her at a previous marriage, it cannot be given her again should she become a widow and remarry. It is not given outside the Mass without dispensation.

Near the end of the Mass, just before the usual blessing, the priest admonishes the couple on the duties of married life, and prays that they may enjoy peace, fruitfulness, and everlasting happiness. Sprinkling the bride and groom with holy water, he blesses both.



From St. Paul we learn what armor to wear in our struggle for Christian perfection:

"Put on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. . . . Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of justice, and having your feet shod with the readiness of the gospel of peace, in all things taking up the shield of faith, with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, that is, the word of God" (Ephes. 6:11-17).

172. Christian Perfection

Should we be satisfied merely to keep the commandments of God?—We should not be satisfied merely to keep the commandments of God, but should always be ready to do good deeds, even when they are not commanded.

1. If we only give God what He *commands* us to give, we would be doing only what is absolutely necessary. In such a case we would go to church only once a week, plus six holydays of obligation a year; we would go to Confession only once a year, and receive Holy Communion only during the Easter Time. By doing these things and avoiding all serious violation of the Commandments, we would still be obeying God and keeping ourselves from mortal sin and saving our souls.

What would you think of a child who gives to his parents only what is demanded of him? What would you think of him if he never showed them any affection, never did anything extra for them to show his love and gratitude? We would say he is an abnormal son, an unnatural child.

2. We say that we *love* God, our Creator, Father, and Friend, our Saviour, the Source of all our benefits and graces. Love is proved by *deeds*, by the amount of sacrifice we would be willing to make for the beloved person. This is why we know Christ the God-Man loved us so much: He sacrificed everything, life itself, for us. Can we ever return such love?

Can we ever serve God sufficiently, to show our affection? He does not *command* us to go out of our way to help the poor; but can we consider anyone a good Christian who does not do so? A Christian should not only *obey* the commands of Christ, but should *follow* His counsels. We go to church on weekdays, because we love Him, and wish to visit Him in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar, to receive Him into our very hearts. We should think up extra things to do for God, as we think up extra things to do for the person we love most. Our parents do not command us to buy gifts for them on their birthdays; but if we do so, are they not delighted at our show of affection?

In what does Christian perfection consist?—Christian perfection consists in union with God by the practice of virtue; it requires love of God and our neighbor, and detachment of the heart from the things of this world.

By striving after true Christian perfection, we make clearer and clearer in ourselves the true image of God. Is not this a wonderful incentive?

1. Christian perfection is nothing else but *sanctity,* holiness, the love of the saints for God. Lest those who call themselves "ordinary mortals" be afraid to aspire to this sanctity, we must make it clear that it does not require extraordinary works. It only requires deep, abiding love, for "Love is the fulfilling of the law," the fulfillment of it to its very foundation and depths, not merely on the surface.

Did our Blessed Mother do any extraordinary works, judged by normal standards of the world? But no mortal has been or can be as holy, as full of perfection. Let us surrender ourselves fervently to God, and we shall be on the way to Christian perfection, according to our individual capacity.

2. God requires all to *aspire* to Christian perfection. He says: "You therefore are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

Those who practice virtue will receive an eternal reward, and are happy even on earth. Hence Our Lord pronounces them blessed in the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-10).

3. *All states* of life can be sanctified by those who wish only to live for God. Saints are found in every class. Love of God is in everybody's power.

As there are different *degrees* of love, so also there are different degrees of perfection, according to the capacity of each individual. But all can practice virtue. From other good works we can excuse ourselves, saying: "I cannot fast, for I am sickly," etc. But no one can say, "I cannot love." However, religious and *pious practices* should be adapted to the occupations and duties of an individual. A mother of twelve young children would do wrong to spend half the day in church praying. One who works in an office should not stay so long at daily Mass that he is habitually late for his work.

4. The *model* of Christian perfection is Our Lord. The saints, who imitated Him steadfastly, are also patterns of perfection.

No one can ever be as perfect as Our Lord. But having Him for a model inspires us to strive for greater and greater sanctity. He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). And in reply to the young man who wished to become perfect, Jesus said, "Come, follow me" (Matt. 19:21). We should try to make progress every day, so that we are better today than yesterday. "He who is just, let him be just still, and he who is holy, let him be hallowed still" (Apoc. 22:11).

(a) We should begin from youth to strive after perfection.

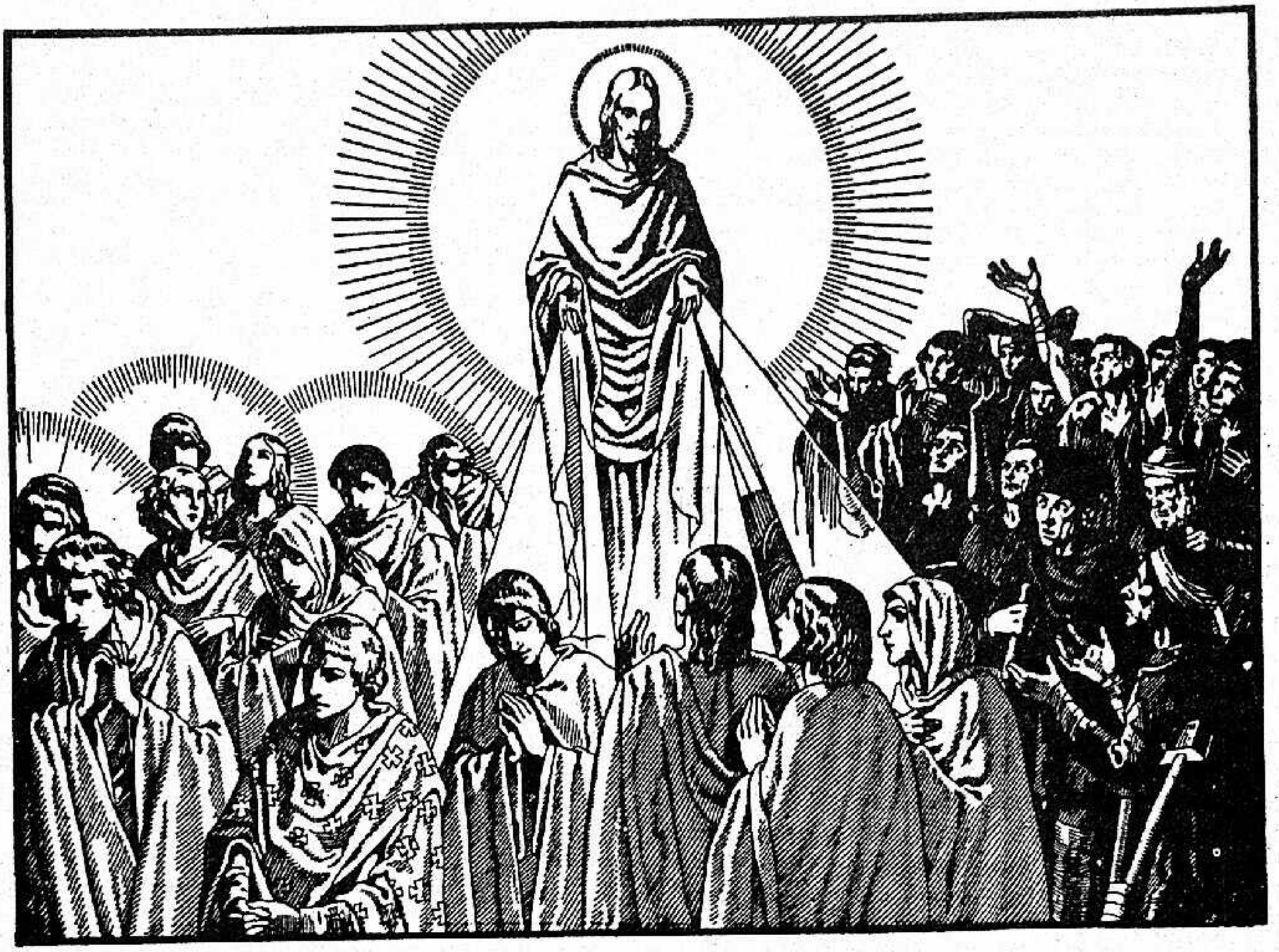
Blessed Dominic Savio on his First Communion day, when only seven years old, made some resolutions to which he was faithful till his death. These resolutions helped him towards perfection, so that at the age of fifteen he died a holy death. Among his resolutions were: (1) frequent confession and communion; (2) Jesus and Mary as friends; and (3) death rather than sin.

(b) Every one should choose for his model a saint whose position and calling are similar to his own.

Schoolboys will find among the best models Saint Aloysius; schoolgirls, the Little Flower, Saint Agnes, and always the Blessed Virgin; married men, St. Louis of France, St. Thomas More, married women, St. Monica, St. Elizabeth; religious, the canonized founders of their order; priests, the Curé d'Ars, St. John Bosco, St. Philip Neri; bishops, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis of Sales, etc.

5. In order to be in the state of Christian perfection, we must have a spirit of detachment towards the things of this world. Let us remember that the *eternal* is what counts; the *temporal* is given us by God only to help us fulfill our end of praising, of serving Him, and thus saving our soul.

By the spirit of detachment is not meant actual dispossession. A rich man can be completely detached from riches, if he uses them only for the end God gave them to him, if he does not love his riches for the sake of riches or for other worldly purposes, but uses his wealth for God and his fellowmen. A man in a high position of honor and power is detached from such honor and glory if he knows they all come from God, and uses them for God's purposes. On the other hand, even the poorest of men and the most despised can violate the spirit of detachment if he desires to possess what he does not have, for the sake of such possession.



Christ is the source of all graces. His merits give effect to the means of perfection which we use. This is why frequent confession and communion are especially helpful. They serve to keep us humble.

If we are continually accusing ourselves, we are likely to form a delicate conscience. God will give us abundant graces, for confession and communion are sacraments and sources of grace.

173. General Means of Perfection

What are the general means of perfection?—After the observance of the Commandments of God and of the Church, the general means of perfection are: (a) faithfulness in small things; (b) self-control and self-denial; (c) order and regularity; (d) a habit of prayer; (e) a frequent recourse to solitude; (f) reading spiritual books and meditation; and (g) frequentation of the sacraments.

These are general means of perfection, because they are ***suited to every one*** in every state and condition of life.

1. By *faithfulness* in small things, we obtain greater graces and avoid grave sins more easily. As in the natural order, so in the spiritual, great things come from apparently insignificant things. We should be careful to *avoid venial sins* in order to be saved from mortal sins.

We should avoid hurting anyone, telling little lies, fault-finding, complaining, etc. *"He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little"* (Ecclus. 19:1). How small is a seed, yet it may grow up into a great tree!

"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in a very little thing is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). Our Lord promises to reward those who are thus faithful, saying: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many" (Matt. 25:21).

2. *Self-control* and *self-denial* are acts of mortification: keeping down anger, and abstaining even from things which are permitted, but above all avoiding even the least yielding to what is forbidden. Self-control is the mark of the true Christian. If we deny

ourselves some things which are permitted, we shall find it easier to avoid what is forbidden. Self-control gives us a strong will. Self-denial is the mark of the human being made to the likeness of God; ***a beast does not say "No" to himself.***

Christ said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself" (Mark 8:34). One may deny oneself by avoiding what is *not necessary,* such as splendid dress, rich food, costly houses and cars, excessive entertainments, curiosity, etc., and above all, by doing *cheerfully* whatever duties come, and accepting with resignation all trials.

3. We observe *order and regularity* by having a fixed time for everything: for rising, retiring, eating, work, recreation, etc.

We should imitate the order that God has placed in the whole universe, regulating everything by law. *Recreation* is not against the practice of Christian perfection; it is a need that God wishes us to satisfy in the proper manner. It should however, not interfere with our duties, or take up too much time.

4. By *prayer* we shall avoid temptations and obtain blessings. We should especially make a habit of ejaculatory prayer.

We should sanctify our *every action* by offering it to God. A good plan is to make a general offering every morning, with our morning prayers. In this way, all we do—work, prayer, and even sleep—becomes a prayer to God.

5. *Solitude* helps us grow in virtue. The noise and bustle of the world are distractions. We should once in a while imitate Our Lord and *withdraw* into solitude, to see our faults better, and go closer to God.

Good Catholics spend a few days every year in a Mission or spiritual retreat, to resort to this valuable solitude.

6. We should have some regular *spiritual reading* and *meditation,* even if for only ten minutes every day, as food for our souls.

Meditation on the truths of faith, the life of Christ, and the lives of the saints, will inflame our hearts to great virtue.

7. God instituted the *sacraments* as effective means of grace. We should have recourse to the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist as often as we reasonably can. Can we get more grace than from God Himself, coming in Holy Communion?

If we could only see the effects of Confession and Holy Communion on the soul! But let us see with the eyes of faith, and exclaim with the Saints, "It is enough for me, O God, that Thou hast revealed it!"

What are the three principal degrees in self-denial?—They are:

1. A habitual disposition to lose all things, even life itself, and suffer all things *rather than commit a mortal sin.* This first degree of self-denial is necessary for all in order to be saved.

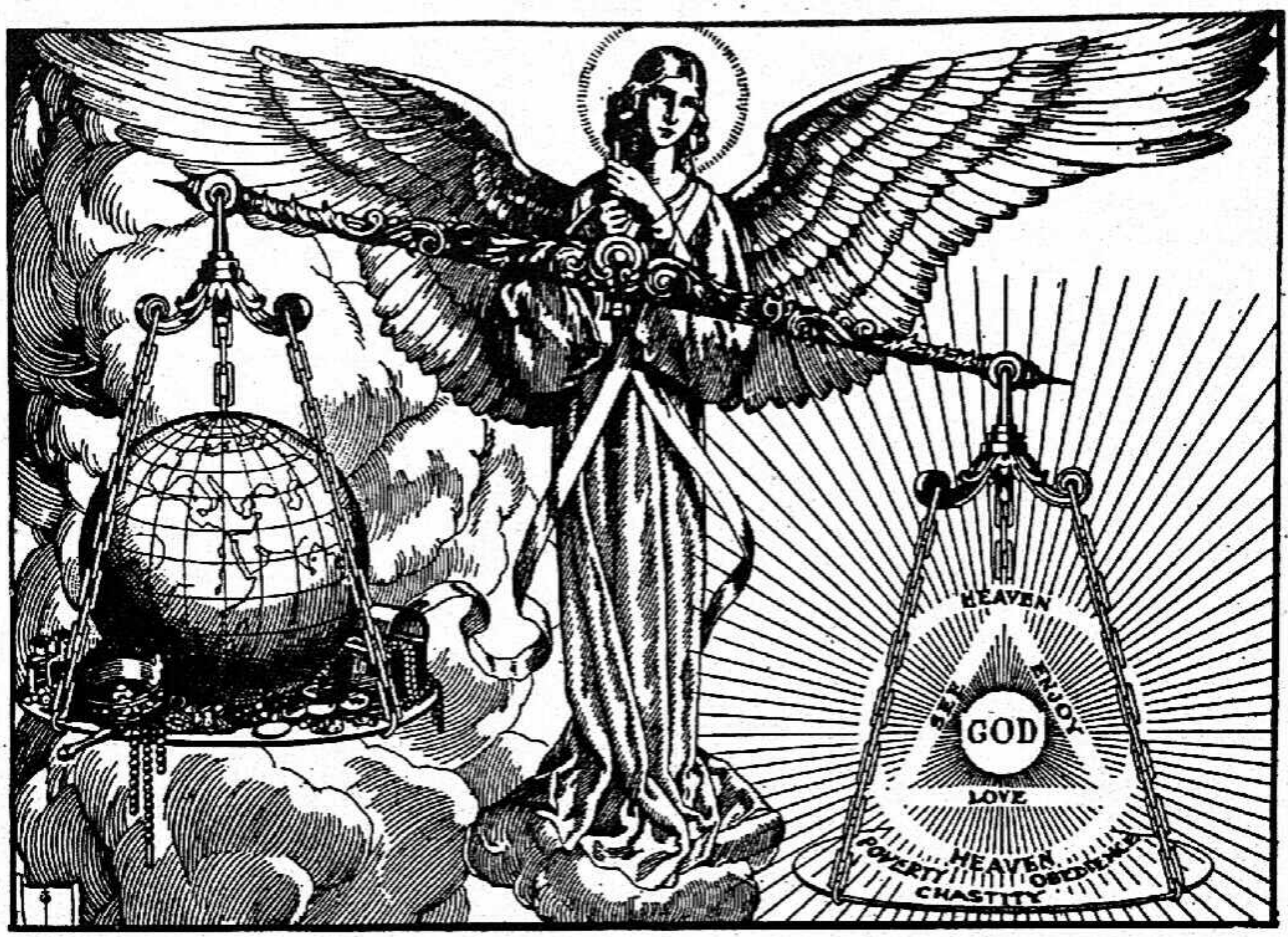
Our Lord said, "Whosoever doth not carry his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Our ordinary cross, the cross of all mortals, is our human tendency to weakness and concupiscence, to fall into sin; against this tendency we must all do valiant battle, to acquire the first degree of perfection, of self-denial. Jesus exacts absolute self-denial in everything that is an obstacle to eternal salvation, life not excepted. "For he who would save his life (at the expense of what he owes God) will lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake and for the gospel's sake will save it" (Mark 8:35).

2. A habitual disposition to lose and suffer all, *rather than commit a deliberate venial sin.* This second degree is a mark of affection towards God: we avoid even small faults because they displease Him.

It is those in this second disposition that are very active in good works, trying to do all they can for the glory of God, out of love for God, and for their fellowmen for God's sake. They set a good example to others by their good works, according to the words of Scripture: "A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. So let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14, 16). They are far from those hypocritical worldlings who do good works in order to obtain praise and honor; of these Our Lord, said, "Take heed not to practice your good before men in order to be seen by them; otherwise you shall have no reward with your Father in heaven" (Matt. 6:1).

3. A habitual disposition to *prefer* being poor, forgotten, despised, and suffering,—with Jesus on the Cross, in order to resemble Him more, as a proof of love,—rather than rich, honored and praised, full of delights and consolations. This third degree is the acme of perfection; it is *sanctity.*

By this disposition, one becomes a fool for Christ's sake. Suppose that God has given you wealth, honors, talents, and all other worldly blessings, and assures you that with them all, enjoying them all, you can still reach the same place in heaven that you can without them. And yet, just to resemble Jesus, who was poor and despised and tortured, you joyfully choose to give up all your worldly blessings. Is this not folly in the eyes of the world? And yet it is of such people that Our Lord spoke: "The kingdom of heaven has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force" (Matt. 11:12).



Those who follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience give up the pleasures of the world in order to serve and love God more fully. They put into practice the idea behind these words of Holy Scripture: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" God gives more weight to the Counsels than to riches.

174. The Evangelical Counsels

What does Our Saviour especially recommend that is not strictly commanded by the law of God?—Our Saviour especially recommends the observance of the Evangelical Counsels—voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and perfect obedience.

1. "Evangelical" here means contained in the Gospels; these *counsels* of perfection are clearly set forth in Holy Scripture.

They are called *counsels*, because they are an invitation and not a command; all are *invited*, but no one is *forced*. "Not all can accept this teaching; but those to whom it has been given" (Matt. 19:11).

2. By means of the evangelical counsels the three chief evil tendencies of man—avarice, sensuality, and pride—are destroyed, enabling him to *rise* more freely to God.

Good works are *mild remedies* for these evil tendencies. Prayer cures pride; fasting cures sensuality; and almsgiving cures avarice. But the evangelical counsels are *a radical remedy* for these three evils. Obedience subdues pride; chastity destroys sensuality; and poverty blots out avarice.

3. The evangelical counsels, however, are *not in themselves perfection*. They are only the best means for attaining perfection.

If we adopt the counsels, but do not follow them or make sacrifices for them, we are far from perfect.

What is voluntary poverty?—Voluntary poverty is the renunciation of all earthly possessions, for the love of God.

1. *Christ* counseled voluntary poverty: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor" (Matt. 19:21).

Our Lord Himself was extremely poor. A stable was His birthplace; a poor woman was His Mother; a carpenter was His foster-father. He had nowhere to lay His head.

2. To give alms according to one's means is the *duty* of every Christian. But voluntary poverty means the giving up, for the love of God, of not only part, but of *all our earthly property,* and suffering the hardships of poverty.

What is perpetual chastity?—Perpetual chastity consists in abstaining from marriage and all unclean desires.

1. *Christ* counseled perfect chastity: "Let him accept it who can" (Matt. 19:12). Christ Himself was perfectly chaste and virginal. His mother was a virgin. He loved children, who are virginal.

"Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give an opinion. . . . He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided. And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, thinks about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit. Whereas she who is married thinks about the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. 7:25, 32-34).

2. The sixth and ninth commandments of God oblige us to live chaste lives, and to avoid impurity. But lifelong and perfect chastity means besides the *sacrifice of something lawful:* marriage.

The care of a family may engross a man in material interests, to the detriment of his spiritual good. Let us remember what Saint Paul said.

Is perfect chastity especially pleasing to God?—Yes, perfect chastity is a virtue most pleasing to God.

1. When God wished to give a mortal Mother to His Son, God chose the purest of the daughters of Juda, a ***virgin,*** Mary. When He wanted a protector for the Blessed Virgin and her future Child, God chose a virgin, Joseph, the most chaste of men. Christ Himself was a virgin, and the Apostle He loved best, the one who leaned on His breast at the Last Supper, and to whom He confided His Mother from the cross, was also a virgin, St. John the Evangelist.

"O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory, for the memory of it is immortal: because it is known both with God and with men" (Wis. 4:1).

2. Priests and members of religious communities, both men and women, are bound to celibacy and perfect chastity. *Celibacy* is the state of being unmarried.

St. Paul commended the state of celibacy: "I say to the unmarried, and to widows, it is good for them if they so remain, even as I" (1 Cor. 7:8). He said: "He who gives his virgin in marriage does well, and he who does not give her does better" (1 Cor. 7:38).

3. Even the *heathen* recognize and honor the virtue of virginal chastity. If the heathen respect those who prefer virginity to the married state, how much more should Christians respect those who, from supernatural motives, choose to live a life of chastity!

In pagan Rome six virgins, called the Vestal Virgins, were appointed to keep the so-called sacred fire burning on the altar in the temple of Vesta. These virgins usually came to the temple at the age of ten years, and remained there for thirty years. During that time they were forbidden to marry.

The Romans believed that the Vestal Virgins brought them good fortune and obtained for them the protection of their gods. They treated the Vestal Virgins with the greatest respect. They were accorded military honors in public. If a criminal, on his way to execution, happened to meet a Vestal Virgin, he was immediately pardoned. The virgins were given the best places wherever they went; they were clad in white robes. If a Vestal Virgin broke her vow of chastity, she was buried alive.

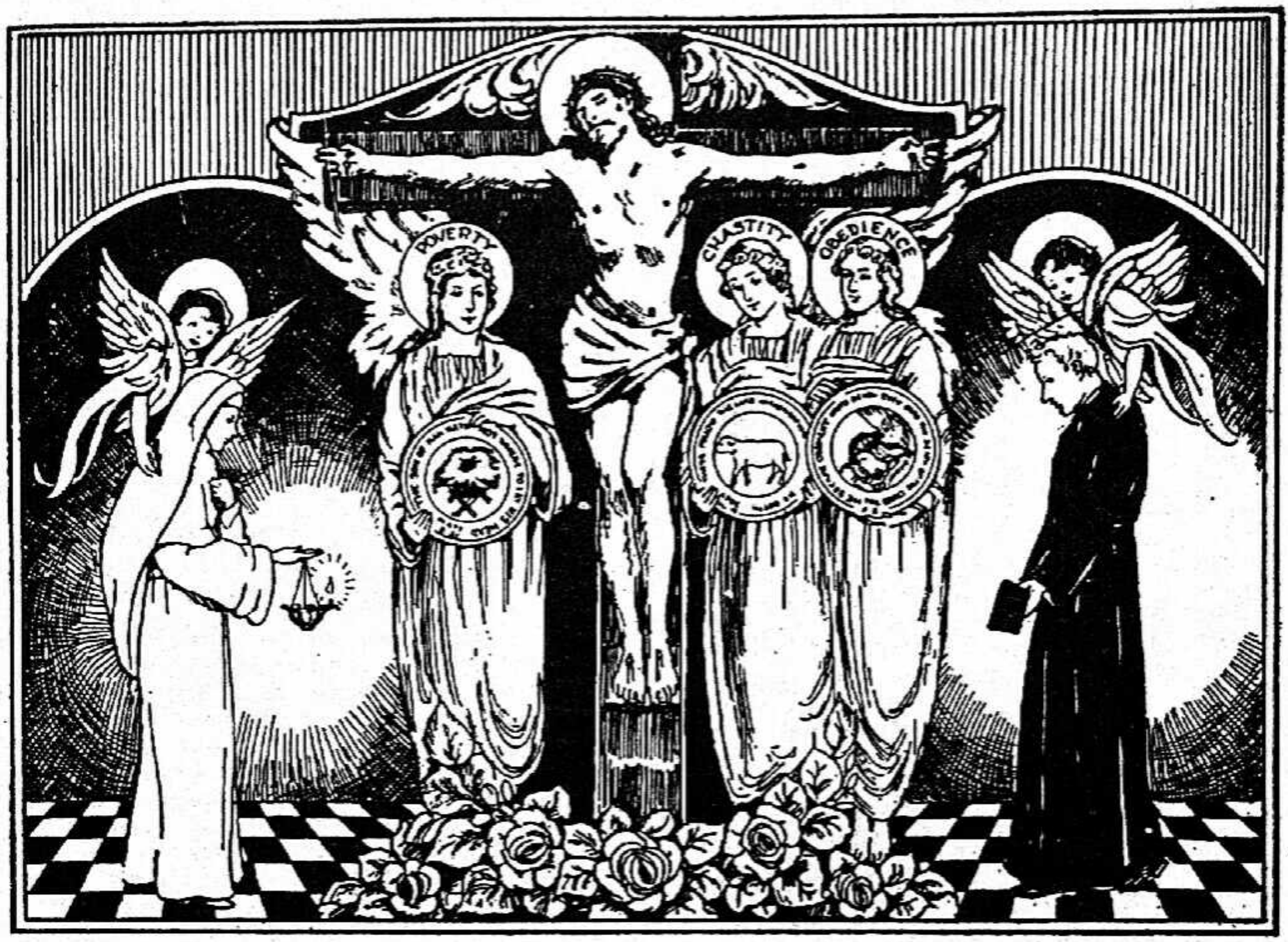
What is perfect obedience? — Perfect obedience is the complete subjection of one's will to that of a superior.

1. *Christ* counseled perfect obedience. He said to His Apostles: "Follow me." He said to the rich young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor . . . and come, follow me" (Matt. 19:21), *i.e.,* "Come and be guided by Me in all things."

Christ was perfectly obedient to His heavenly Father. He never sought His own will, but always the will of the Father Who sent Him. He was obedient to His Mother and to St. Joseph.

2. All men are bound to render Christian obedience to their superiors *according to their state.* Children must obey their parents; citizens must obey the civil authorities; all must obey their spiritual superiors. But this obligation leaves us free in many things; it does not bind all our actions. Perfect obedience on the other hand requires us ***to obey in everything.*** It is the greatest sacrifice we can give to God.

If we fast, give alms, or lose our reputation for God's sake, we only give a part of ourselves. But if we give perfect obedience, we sacrifice our will; we give all we have. We have nothing more to give.



The illustration shows a young man and a young woman making their offerings to Jesus Crucified, to live in the religious state bound by the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

175. The Religious State

What is the religious state?—The religious state is a permanent way of community life, by which the faithful bind themselves to observe the evangelical counsels by vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The first religious order developed under St. Anthony the Great, who assembled around him in the desert a number of disciples living in separate cells. In the year 348 A. D. St. Pachomius gathered the anchorites under a common roof, and gave them a fixed rule; this was done on an island near the mouth of the Nile River in Egypt. From there the monastic life spread to Palestine and Syria, and thence to Asia Minor. In the 5th and 6th centuries, the monastic life was propagated in the West by St. Martin of Tours and St. Benedict.

1. The religious state is called the *state of perfection*, because those who embrace it have the obligation, through faithfulness to their vows, of aiming at evangelical perfection.

Those who are in the state of perfection are not necessarily all perfect; but they are expected to *aim* at perfection. Many people in the world are actually more holy than some in the religious state. It is however easier to strive after perfection in the religious state, where there are more aids and means than in the world with its distractions.

2. The call to the religious state is only an *invitation:* "Not all can accept this teaching, but those to whom it has been given" (Matt. 19: 11).

Members of religious orders or congregations are bound by the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They are devoted to the exclusive service of God, "without distractions" (1 Cor. 7:35).

Who may be admitted into the religious state?—Any Catholic who is free from impediment, who has a right intention, and who is fitted to fulfill the duties of the religious life may be admitted into the religious state.

1. *Impediments* are: an existing marriage, lack of age (being less than 15 years of age), debts that must be paid, parents who need one's support.

The mere *opposition of parents* who do not need one to support them is not an obstacle. Many Saints had to meet parental objections firmly before they could join religious orders.

2. If one has a firm desire and resolution to enter a religious community out of a good motive, to serve God better, he has the right *intention* for the religious state.

One who may intend to join a religious congregation just to assure himself of a certain living, or in the hope of obtaining honors, has not the right intention.

3. Among the things *needed* to fulfill the duties of a religious life are: virtue, sufficient health, and adequate education for the work of the particular congregation to be joined.

In general, the qualifications for a vocation are ***good will, good health,*** and ***good sense.***

What steps should be taken in embracing the religious state?—Before any definite decision is made, a competent spiritual director should be consulted.

1. The zealous director of souls will give *counsel* regarding both spiritual and practical matters.

One need not be strongly attracted to the religious state before deciding to embrace it. Feelings generally have nothing to do with the matter; what is most needed is *will*. Feelings pass, but day after day one needs a strong will to remain faithful to the vows taken in a religious congregation.

2. One should apply for *admission* into the religious community chosen. If one is refused and has to return home, he should not feel disgraced. The novitiate is precisely a trial, to find out one's qualifications.

Sometimes, even if one is *refused* in a certain community, he should not think that he cannot become a religious. He should persevere and try another community. Several great Saints were at first refused, or even sent out, by the congregations they had at first chosen. Those who are sent out should recognize the trial as permitted by God, and offer it up to Him.

3. Once accepted and permitted to take the vows, all one has to do is *to persevere,* to live according to the vows, and try day by day to attain to the highest perfection.

How should parents behave if their child chooses a religious vocation? — Parents should give special praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessing, if their child chooses a religious vocation.

Mrs. Colonel Vaughan, an English mother, prayed every day that all her children might become priests and nuns. In time, of her eight sons one became a cardinal, a second an archbishop, another a bishop, and three priests; all of her five daughters became Sisters.

1. As *no one should be forced, so no one should be prevented* from becoming either a Priest or a Sister. It is a sin for parents to oppose or prevent their child's religious vocation. It is stealing him from the service of God, Who has called him.

Our Lord promised, "Everyone who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting" (Matt. 19:29).

2. It is a *great honor* for a family to have even one of its members dedicated to the special service of God, as a priest, a brother or a nun. Christian parents should pray that God may give their child a religious vocation.

Our Lord said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). By this "hate" does not mean to break God's commandment of love; it means only to give up for God's sake, to detach oneself from what is good, in order to be fully attached to the one infinitely Perfect Good, God. "Every one of you who does not renounce *all* that he possesses, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

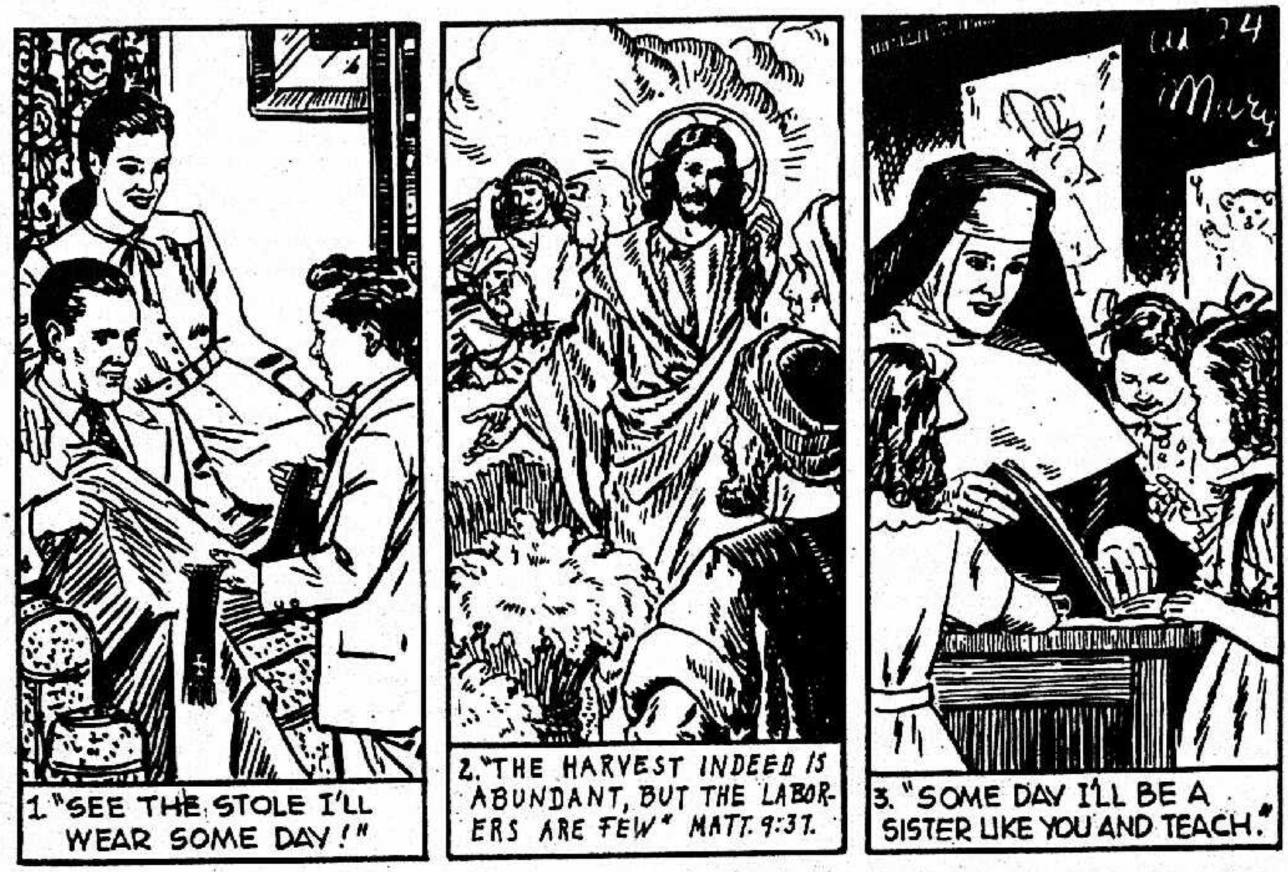
What is the dowry?—The dowry is a sum of money required by congregations of women, payable upon the profession of a novice as member of the community.

1. The purpose of the dowry is to provide the person with some *support* should she leave the community at the end of her temporary vows, or after a dispensation, or upon dismissal.

In case one leave the community, the dowry is returned to her intact. Meanwhile, during her stay in the community, the interest on the dowry is used for *her maintenance.*

2. Those who cannot give a dowry may be *dispensed* with the consent of the Holy See.

Applicants who have completed their education are more easily dispensed.


1. "SEE THE STOLE I'LL WEAR SOME DAY!"
2. "THE HARVEST INDEED IS ABUNDANT, BUT THE LABORERS ARE FEW" MATT. 9:37.
Mary
3. "SOME DAY I'LL BE A SISTER LIKE YOU AND TEACH."

"The harvest indeed is abundant, but the laborers are few!" Jesus calls to his special service, for workers in His harvest. A boy and a girl hear the call. The boy (1) says to his parents: "See the stole I'll wear some day!" And the girl (3) dreams of the day when she will be teaching school as a religious Sister. If one feels, as these two young people do, that he should like to serve God fully, let him hasten to consecrate himself to God in the priestly or religious state.

176. Religious Communities

How may religious communities be classified?—Religious communities may be classified as orders or congregations.

1. Religious *orders* are those institutes in which the members take solemn vows; they are chiefly the old orders of monks and nuns.

Among the religious orders for men in the United States are: Augustinians, Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Trappists, etc.

2. Religious *congregations* are those in which the members take only simple vows; most religious communities are of this kind. The Jesuits, after a number of years in simple vows, may also take solemn vows.

For men among the largest communities are: Divine Word Fathers, Jesuits, Passionists, Redemptorists, Salesians, Salvatorians, etc. For women we have the Benedictines, Dominicans, Felician Sisters, Heart of Mary Sisters, Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Notre Dame Sisters, Sisters of Charity, and Sisters of St. Joseph, among numerous others.

3. Religious institutes may also be classified as clerical or lay. The *clerical* communities are those in which a great proportion of the members are priests. The *lay* communities are those with the great majority of their members not ordained priests.

For men, these last are what we term ***brotherhoods***, such as the: De la Salle Brothers, Marist Brothers, St. Francis Xavier Brothers, Sacred Heart Brothers.

4. Some communities follow the manner of life of religious, living together under the government of superiors and with approved constitutions. But they are *not bound by the usual three vows* of religious,

and are therefore not properly classified as religious institutions, nor are their members properly called "religious".

Among the most well-known of such societies we have the Lazarists (St. Vincent de Paul Missionaries), Maryknoll Fathers, Oratorians of St. Philip Neri, and Fathers of the Precious Blood.

In what kinds of work are the religious communities engaged?—They are engaged in all kinds of work, ranging from the purely contemplative life of prayer to the active life of missionaries.

1. Members of *contemplative* orders are strictly cloistered, and devote their life chiefly to prayer and penance. This prayer is not for the individual alone, but for the greater honor and glory of God, the well-being of the Mystical Body of Christ, the reclaiming of all into the Fold of the Good Shepherd.

Among contemplative orders we may mention the Carthusian and Cistercian monks, and the Carmelite, Poor Clare and Perpetual Adoration nuns.

2. Members of *semi-contemplative* communities observe the "mixed life"; they superimpose the active on the contemplative life. They seldom leave their houses, and engage themselves in teaching, caring for penitents and orphans, etc.

Among semi-contemplative congregations we may mention: the Assumption Sisters, Dominican Sisters, and Good Shepherd Sisters.

3. The religious communities of *active life* are dedicated to teaching, hospital work, mission work, etc. Active life does not refer to mere bodily activity, but to external activities carried on outside the religious house.

Thus Cistercians who farm their land do not pursue an active life. Most of the religious institutes in the United States are engaged in the active life. Among them we may mention: Jesuits, Franciscan Tertiaries, Lazarists, Passionists, Redemptorists, Salesians, and Brothers of Christian Schools.

Which religious community should one choose who wishes to dedicate his life entirely to God?—One who wishes to dedicate his life entirely to God should choose the religious community best suited to his inclination and ability.

If one is interested in teaching, one should choose a teaching congregation. If a girl likes teaching, but is very retiring, and prefers not to be too much in the world, she should choose a semi-contemplative congregation. If she wants to be totally separated from the world and devote her time to prayer and penance, she should join a contemplative order. Those who are active, healthy, and willing to do anything and suffer anything for Christ should join a missionary congregation.

Besides priests, religious are *needed,* both men and women, for the schools, the hospitals, the teaching of religion, care of the poor, and of churches.

Women cannot become priests, but they can be very useful as religious Sisters. Many a soul has been converted to the Faith because of the example, the prayers, or the influence of a Sister. Sisters are most useful too in the missions: they are the auxiliaries of the missionary priests in their difficult work of winning souls for Christ.

All who volunteer can be used: ***"The harvest indeed is abundant, but the laborers are few."***

How can one help increase the number of priests and religious?—One can help increase the number by prayer, by helping support poor seminarians, or by consecrating himself in the priestly or religious state.

1. Every one should *pray* steadfastly and sincerely for priests and religious.

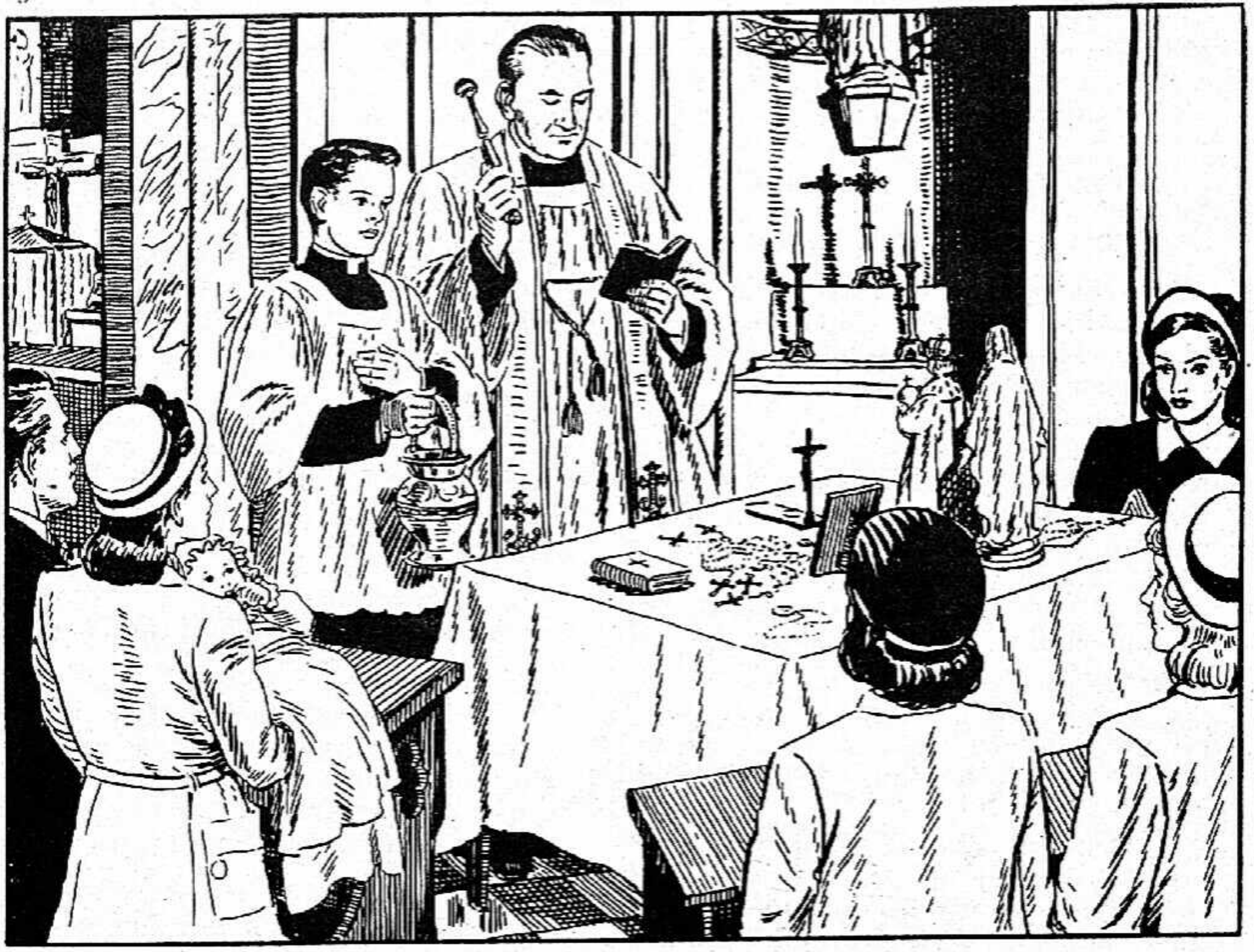
Christ said: "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38).

2. Those who are financially able should *support* poor students in the seminaries.

Many otherwise qualified young people are prevented from consecrating themselves to God in the priestly state for lack of means.

3. Lastly, he who is earnest about the service of God should decide whether he is willing to *consecrate* himself entirely to that service. Such as have the will and necessary qualifications should either *enter the priesthood or one of the religious congregations.*

There would be many more vocations to the priestly or religious life if young people would pay less attention to their worldly amusements, pleasures, and ease, and more to God and their salvation. If they would only ponder over the fact that they have just *one* life to live, and that all their eternity depends upon the way they spend that life, they would surely try to make the most of it. How many are willing to make sacrifices for wealth or honor! Yet these will have to be left behind at death; the only lasting riches come from the loyal service of God.



The Church has blessings for persons, places, and things. A mother after childbirth is blessed. Anybody may ask a priest to bless him. Houses and places of business, fields and crops, may be blessed. Devotional articles, such as medals, rosaries, crucifixes, images and holy pictures, may be blessed. In certain places it is a custom to wear blessed dresses. All these blessings and objects blessed are sacramentals. We use them to obtain favors from God.

177. Sacramentals

What are sacramentals?—Sacramentals are holy things or actions of which the Church makes use to obtain for us from God, through its intercession, spiritual and temporal favors.

1. The term *sacramental* is applied both to the blessing or consecration given by the Church, and to the objects blessed or consecrated. Sacramentals are so called because of their resemblance to the sacraments. As in the sacraments, visible signs are used in the sacramentals, such as holy water, the sign of the cross, sacred oils, etc., together with a form of words.

Whatever visible signs are used by the Church in the worship of God or the promotion of devotion are sacramentals. By these visible signs the benediction of Almighty God is invoked on persons, places, or things, through the intercessory prayer of Holy Mother Church. The prayers of the Church have great efficacy, for they are united to the prayers of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of all the saints.

2. *Our Lord* sanctioned the use of sacramentals; He blessed the loaves and fishes, the young children, and the Apostles before the Ascension. He gave the Apostles power over evil spirits, to cast them out and to heal all kinds of diseases.

In the Old Testament we read of God's blessing our first parents, of Noe blessing his two sons, of Isaac blessing Jacob, of Jacob blessing his twelve sons, of Moses blessing the tribes of Israel. The Jewish priests blessed the people every day. "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed" (Ps. 1:7). "I reprehend myself and do penance in dust and ashes" (Job 4:2).

3. *Prayers* and ceremonies of the Church are also sacramentals, because they increase devotion in the worship of God.

The Church makes use of ceremonies in imitation of the example of the Old Law, in which God Himself prescribed ceremonies; also in imitation of Our Lord, Who used His breath, made clay, used gestures, in working miracles, when He could have worked them as easily by a mere act of His will. Our Lord gave the Church power to instruct men, and therefore the implied power to do whatever is necessary to help out the purpose. Ceremonies without doubt add solemnity to religious acts.

What are the chief kinds of sacramentals?—The chief kinds of sacramentals are:

1. *Blessings* given by priests and bishops.

(a) *Priests* are authorized to give the blessings for sacramentals, with the exception of those especially reserved to the bishops.

The *laity* can bless, but not in the name of the Church. Thus we have the custom of parents blessing their children when they leave the house, at the Angelus, or when they go on a journey. In these private blessings, the more pious the person giving the blessing, the greater its effect.

(b) Several acts of consecration appertain solely to *bishops*, and may be performed only by priests with the necessary faculties. Examples are: the consecration of churches, altars, sacred vessels for Mass, and bells; and blessing of the holy oils (done on Holy Thursday in the cathedral church). Bells are an important accessory of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a sign of prayer.

These are the principal ceremonies at the blessing of a *bell:* The bell is raised, washed inside and out with water mixed with salt, and then dried carefully with towels. Psalms are recited, and prayers are said begging God to bless the faithful every time the bell rings. The exterior of the bell is anointed in seven places, with the holy oil for the sick. Then the inside is anointed in four places, with holy chrism. The bell is named in honor of and after one of the Saints. Then the censer containing lighted incense and myrrh is placed under the bell, to incense and perfume the interior. The elaborate ceremony ends with the singing of the Gospel describing Our Lord's visit to Mary and Martha.

2. *Exorcisms* against evil spirits.—The exorcism of possessed persons or things consists in having the minister of the Church command the evil spirit to depart from the person or thing. In modern times cases of possession are comparatively rare; this we can gratefully attribute to the blessings and grace of Christianity.

Nevertheless such cases still occur; should we hear of any, let us notify the priest. Our Lord Himself commanded many devils to depart from possessed persons of His time.

3. Blessed *objects* of devotion.—Of these we may make mention of: holy oils, holy water, candles, ashes, palms, crosses and crucifixes, scapulars, medals, Agnus Deis, rosaries, images, holy pictures, bells, and blessed dresses.

All objects used in divine service, such as sacred vessels, linens, vestments, are specially blessed. Mother Church has special blessings for everything we use: for radios, automobiles, airplanes, fields, libraries, etc. We should ask the priest to bless everything we use and have. As St. Paul said: "Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). By sacramental blessings, we consecrate to God all we are and have.

In what does the blessing for persons or places consist?—The blessing for persons or places consists in this: that the minister of the Church invokes the divine benediction upon the person or place concerned.

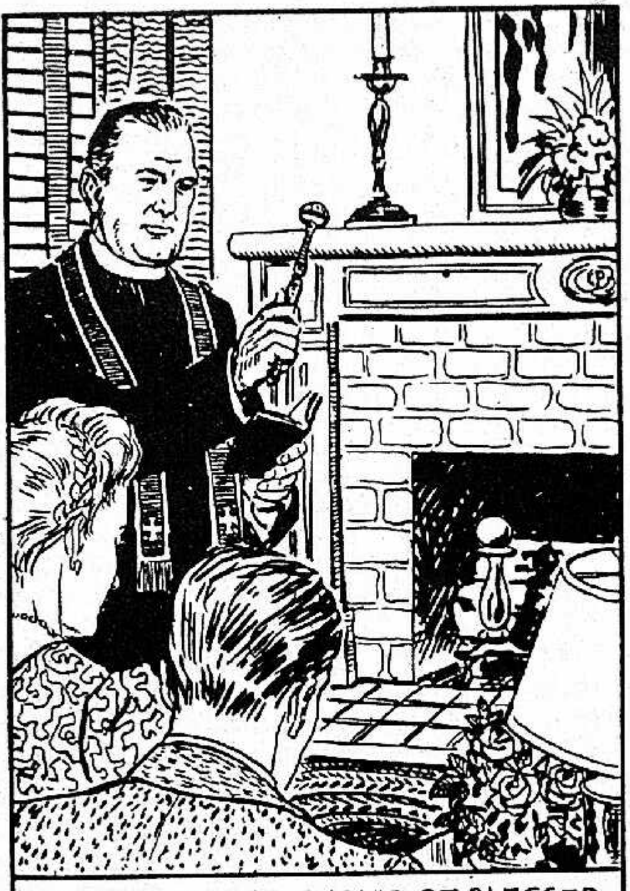
The divine blessing for persons is to be understood as different from divine grace; this is why sacramentals are distinct from sacraments. The divine blessing averts earthly ills and promotes temporal welfare; whereas the divine grace beautifies the soul. One is chiefly temporal, the other spiritual, in effect.

1. Blessings given for *persons*. Of these the most common are the blessing at the end of Mass and other occasions, the blessing for communicants, the nuptial blessing, the blessing for mothers before and after childbirth, the blessing for the sick, the last blessing for the dying, the blessing of the remains of the dead, the consecration of kings, abbots, monks and nuns.

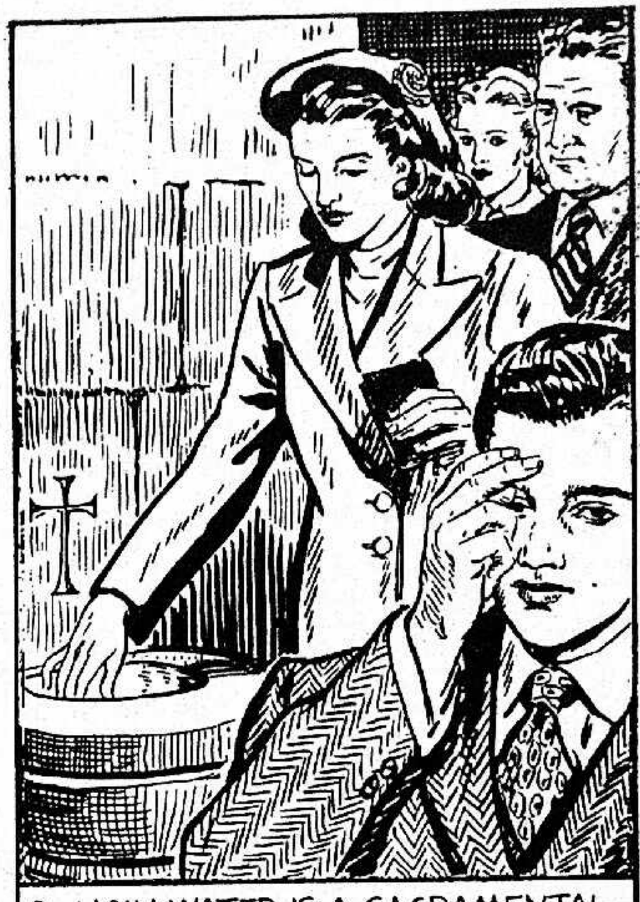
The consecration of kings, abbots, monks, and nuns, consists in having them formally set apart by the Church through its minister so as to be dedicated to its special service. The consecration of bishops and the ordination of priests is a *sacrament*.

The blessing of mothers and their infants was a custom dating from the Old Testament; Mary, the Mother of Our Lord, herself observed this custom. More of our modern mothers should imitate her, imploring God's blessing.

2. Blessings given for *places*. Among the most common places blessed are: churches, chapels, altars, cemeteries, dwelling-houses, places of business, farms, etc.



1. EVERY HOUSE SHOULD BE BLESSED



2. HOLY WATER IS A SACRAMENTAL

1. Every new house should be blessed. The blessing should be renewed every year during the Easter time. There is a special blessing for houses to be given on the Feast of the Epiphany or the Octave. In its ritual the Church prays that God may sanctify the house, and that angels may abide within its walls, and protect all living therein.

2. Holy water is one of the principal sacramentals of the Church. In blessing holy water, the priest first blesses salt, then water, and then mixes both with special prayers. The water symbolizes purity of soul; the salt stands for prudence; the combination is a symbol of purity and immortality. As often as possible, we should make the sign of the cross, first dipping the fingers in holy water. A 100 days' indulgence is gained each time.

178. Use and Value of Sacramentals

How should we make use of sacramentals?—We should make use of sacramentals with faith and devotion, and never make them objects of superstition.

1. If we use sacramentals, as they should be used, in *acknowledgment* of our faith in the efficacy of the blessing of the Church which God Himself founded, our act will be most pleasing to God, and the sacramentals will profit us greatly. If we wear a crucifix or medal on our persons, hoping that by God's grace it will preserve us from evil, we are not superstitious.

We must remember however that of themselves sacramentals have no power. They only have power through the prayer of the Church which uses the authority given by Christ.

2. If one uses sacramentals in the spirit of those who look upon them as powerful in themselves, with *no reference* either to God or the Church, or his own state of grace, he is supersitious.

This is the case with the "charms" which certain ignorant persons use. They sometimes take a crucifix, a prayer-book, a medal, etc., and use it on their persons, believing that it is a charm which will make them immune to bullet-shots, wounds, etc. These charms are used by such persons without any reference whatever to their original purpose of sanctification.

3. We should use sacramentals *constantly*. Every Christian home should have holy water and blessed candles. Every Christian should receive as many blessings as he can. Every mother should take her newly-born infant to church to receive the blessing of the Church. Every Christian house or building should be blessed.

Some men take an attitude of contempt towards sacramentals as fit only for women. They should remember that they too have souls, and not only the women. They can profit as much from sacramentals as the women. They have as much need of prayer and faith as women. Christians reverence and make use of sacramentals, and have firm confidence in the prayer of the Church to make them effective. They know that everybody, however holy, has need enough, in this vale of tears, of all the help he can obtain from God.

4. A Catholic home should have a *private altar* before which the family assembles for prayers. It should have blessed images and a crucifix. Every room should have a crucifix.

Many homes have the laudable custom of keeping burning an oil *votive lamp* on their family altar. In many homes it is the custom to sprinkle the beds with holy water before retiring at night.

5. Whenever we are in trouble, pain, danger, or temptation, the use of sacramentals is of great benefit. Every Catholic should own a blessed *rosary*, and use it. Every Catholic, man, woman, boy, girl, or child should wear *on his person* a blessed crucifix or medal or scapular.

Very often such a sacramental serves to remind the wearer in times of danger or temptation that there is a God Who cares very much what happens to his soul.

6. The Church, by the use of sacramentals, teaches the faithful the *truths of religion*, aside from exciting good thoughts and increasing devotion. The truths of our faith are taught by sacramentals through the faculty of sight, as explanations teach them through hearing. Thus sacramentals are like picture books that are used as aids in the teaching of religion.

One, however simple and unlettered, who kneels before a crucifix and knows about the death of Our Lord on the cross, will better be able to realize His love and sacrifice, than if the catchist merely repeated over and over again that Jesus suffered and died for us.

How do sacramentals obtain favors from God?—Sacramentals obtain favors from God through the prayers of the Church offered for those who make use of them, and through the devotion they inspire.

1. Sacramentals, unlike the sacraments, are *not necessary* to salvation. They were not instituted by Christ, but by the Church. Unlike the sacraments, they have no power to confer grace of themselves. The blessings we receive from sacramentals come by virtue of the prayers of the Church and our devout dispositions.

Thus Baptism of itself, administered by anyone, moves God to wash a soul from original sin. Not all the sacramentals in the world can do this.

2. We must remember that the effect of sacramentals depends on the *pious dispositions* of the person using them.

Therefore those in mortal sin, and those who do not believe in them, will not profit from sacramentals. Sacramentals increase devotion by fixing our thoughts on particular virtues, and helping us appreciate them. For example, upon looking at a crucifix we think of the love of Christ for us; we remember what He suffered to prove that love; we become sorry for the sins that caused such tortures.

What are the chief benefits obtained by the use of the sacramentals?—The chief benefits obtained by the use of the sacramentals are:

1. Actual graces.

If we use them with proper dispositions, that is, while in the state of grace and with firm faith and confidence, sacramentals can profit us greatly.

2. The forgiveness of venial sins.

Sacramentals excite good thoughts and inspire devotion and greater love of God as well as greater sorrow for sin; this devotion and sorrow bring grace, and the grace thus obtained in turn obtains the forgiveness of venial sins. Contrition always remits sin, and sacramentals are an aid to true contrition.

3. Remission of temporal punishment.

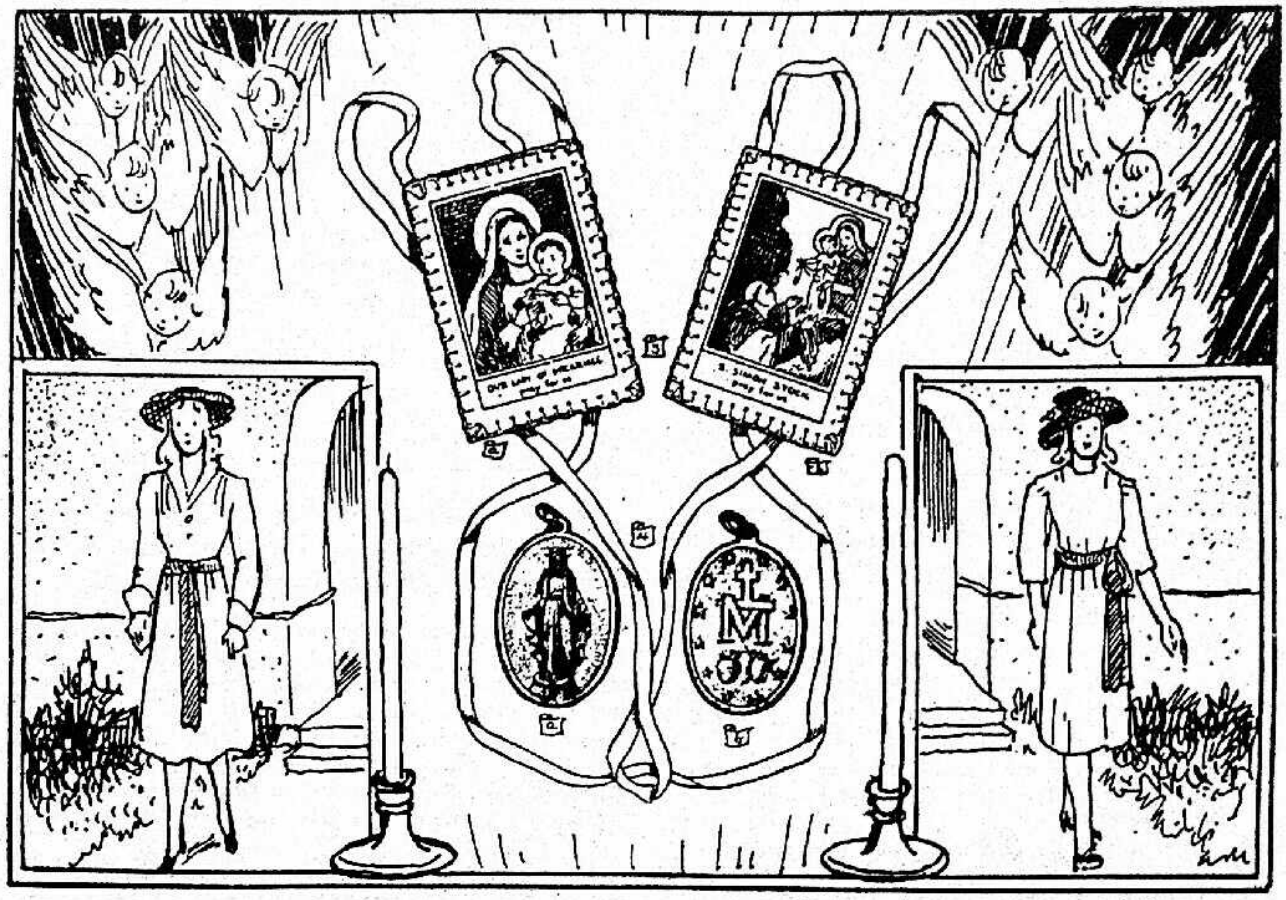
In the old times the Israelites were granted numerous graces through the use of certain objects. If that was there in the Old Law, spiritual results must be obtained in the New Law.

4. Health of body and material blessings.

The Apostles anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them. Innumerable are the examples in modern times of the extraordinary effects of sacramentals.

5. Protection from evil spirits.

We need the protection of sacramentals against the devil, that goes about seeking souls to devour.



The illustration (1) shows a girl wearing the blessed dress of Our Lady of Lourdes. It is white, with a blue sash tied in front. (2) shows one wearing the blessed dress of Our Lady Mary, Help of Christians. It is coral pink, with a powder blue sash tied in a bow at the left side. All blessed dresses must be modest, with long sleeves and closed necklines.

The illustration (3) is a scapular of Our Lady of Carmel. After being imposed, it may be substituted by a properly blessed scapular medal. (4) shows the two faces of the Miraculous Medal. Our Lady herself revealed the design for it.

179. Blessed Objects of Devotion

Which are the blessed objects of devotion most used by Catholics?—The blessed objects of devotion most used by Catholics are: holy water, candles, ashes, palms, crucifixes, medals, rosaries, scapulars, and images of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints.

1. The blessing given by the Church makes *holy water* of special efficacy. We should always make the sign of the cross, whenever possible with holy water; by it we would gain one hundred days' indulgence.

Holy water is placed at the doors of all churches and chapels, for us to use when we go in and out. We should also have it at the doors of all our rooms in our homes. Holy water is used in many blessings of the Church, for the dead, for the consecration of churches, etc.

2. *Candles* are used in the Church as much as holy water. They stand for Christ, the "Light of the World." Candles are blessed on the Feast of the Purification or Candlemas Day, in memory of Holy Simeon's words, calling Christ the "light of revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32). Candles are an enduring prayer, raising their appeal to heaven in our behalf.

When we burn candles by the corpses or graves of our dead, we pray that they may be admitted soon into the light of heaven, the sight of God. We burn candles before images of the saints, as a symbol of the virtues with which they were endowed, and as a supplication for help through their intercession.

The candle lighted at our Baptism denotes the light of the Holy Ghost, which we then receive, and recalls the words of Christ, "So let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). On the altar, the candles signify the presence of Christ, the Light of the World, Who comes down on it at the consecration.

3. *Ashes* are blessed on Ash Wednesday, and marked on the foreheads of the faithful, to remind them of the words of God to Adam: "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread, until thou return to the earth from which thou wast taken; for dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3).

In crossing our foreheads with ashes on Ash Wednesday, the priest says: "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

4. *Palms* are blessed on the Sunday preceding the Feast of Easter, in commemoration of the entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem before His Passion, when He was received with joy and acclaimed with Hosannas.

During the blessing of the palms, the priest prays that those who receive and keep them may be preserved from sin and danger. It is customary to hang up in some part of our homes the blessed palms we receive on Palm Sunday. The palm is a symbol of victory over sin, of triumphal entry into heaven.

5. No church, altar, cemetery, or Catholic institution is without the *cross* or *crucifix;* no home should be without it.

No Catholic dies without the crucifix; and no one should live without carrying it somewhere on his person. When we look at it we remember the infinite love of God for us; with the cross of Christ He proved this love. (*See page* 191.)

6. The most commonly-worn medals are the scapular medals and the Miraculous Medal. The *scapular medals* are substitutes for the cloth scapulars. The *Miraculous Medal* was revealed by Our Lady to Sister Catherine Laboure, a Sister of Charity. The Blessed Virgin appeared to her in the posture now shown on the medal, with the ejaculation, *"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee"* around her. The Blessed Virgin bade Sister Catherine have a medal made according to that model, promising those who should wear it great blessings.

The reverse of the medal, also revealed by Our Lady, has the letter M surmounted by a cross, the two Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and twelve stars. The many cures, temporal blessings and spiritual graces received in a few years by those who first wore the medal caused it to be known as the Miraculous Medal. The feast of our Lady of the Miraculous Medal is celebrated on November 27.

7. Most commonly worn *scapulars* are the brown scapular and the blue scapular.

(a) The *brown scapular* is the badge of the Confraternity of Carmel. The members are supposed to say the office, but for lay people this may be changed to three Hail Marys, which may be part of their daily prayers. Only priests with the *proper faculties* can impose the brown scapular.

In the year 1250 the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Simon Stock, then general of the Carmelite Order. She gave him a scapular, promising that every one who wore it and lived piously should escape damnation, should have her protection in all dangers, and should quickly be released from Purgatory. The original scapular was designed to hang over the head, in front and behind, as many religious still wear it, forming part of their habit.

(b) The *blue scapular* is a devotion in honor of our Lady's Immaculate Conception. It requires the wearers to live a life of chastity according to their state, to pray for the conversion of sinners.

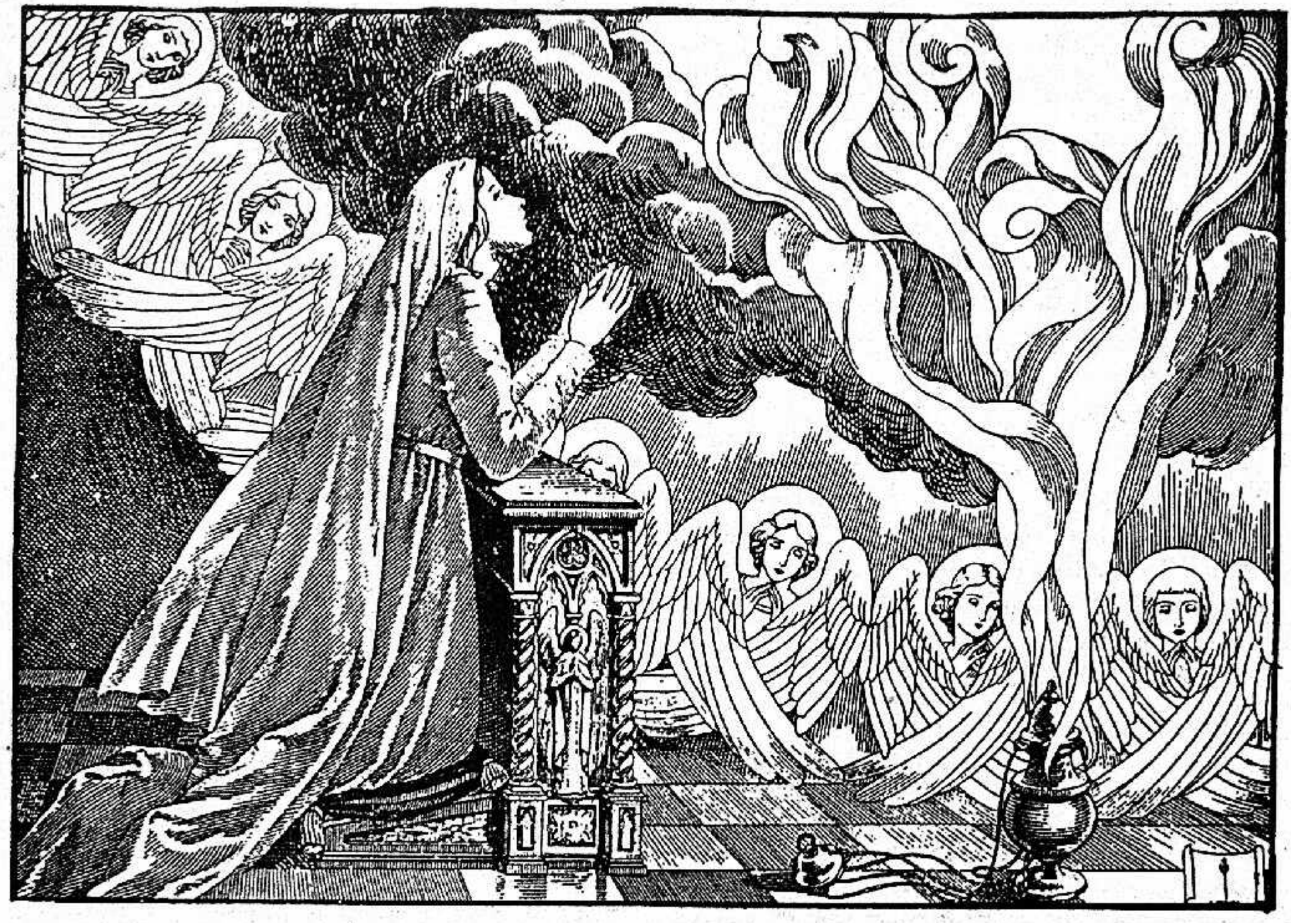
There are besides *other scapulars* as those of the Seven Dolours, of the Holy Trinity and of the Passion. All these five scapulars may be substituted by a properly *blessed medal* one face of which has the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the other face Our Lady's image under whatever title. The medal can substitute only after the cloth scapular has been imposed.

8. An *Agnus Dei* is a disk of white wax stamped with the image of a lamb and cross (standing for Christ); it is solemnly blessed by the Pope and distributed in Rome on the Saturday after Easter.

Formerly the Agnus Dei was given only to the newly baptized who carried it on their persons, in honor of the "Lamb of God."

9. The most commonly used *blessed dresses* are those in honor of our Lady of Lourdes, of our Lady of Sorrows, of the Immaculate Conception, of Carmel, of Mary Help of Christians, of St. Anthony, and of St. Joseph. These dresses are worn as a promise, or to obtain some special favor. Their use is not binding under pain of sin.

Although these blessed dresses are not exactly in the height of fashion, still their use should be encouraged, as a reminder to our girls to dress modestly always; everyone should be a member of this Legion of Modesty. The formula for blessing a dress is in the *Roman Ritual:* "Benedictio Vestis et Cinguli". Even if one who has promised to wear a blessed dress *fails* to *fulfill* her promise, she commits no sin. She merely loses the graces that otherwise she would have received by the faithful fulfillment of her promise.



The following illustrate the qualities of prayer: "He that adoreth God with joy shall be accepted: and his prayer shall approach even to the clouds" (Ecclus. 35:19). "Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight: the lifting up of my hands, as an evening sacrifice" (Ps. 140:2). "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him" (Ps. 144:18). "Ask, and it shall be given you" (Matt. 7:7).

180. Objects and Qualities of Prayer

What is prayer?—Prayer is the lifting up of our minds and hearts to God.

1. Prayer is loving *conversation* with God. The mere thought of God is not prayer: devils think of God, but they do not pray. In prayer we concentrate all the powers of our souls and elevate them to God.

Is it not an honor to be allowed to talk to the President of our country? But at any moment we can talk to God Almighty in prayer; He has no hours of appointment; He has no secretaries to forbid our entrance into His presence.

2. God not only permits, but ***commands*** us to pray. Prayer is a privilege and a duty.

"And he also told them a parable—that they must always pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1). God wants us to talk to Him at any hour of the day and night, and even of the most trifling things. The more often we speak to Him, the better is He pleased. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

3. Prayer includes every kind of *divine worship:* reception of the sacraments, hearing Mass, attending sermons, Benediction, Vespers, etc. All devotions of the Church are prayers.

Prayer is a means by which we obtain God's help. No man can be just who does not pray. Prayer is a recognition of the Creator and His power.

Why do we pray?—We pray:

1. To adore God, expressing to Him our love and loyalty.—This is the prayer of ***praise.*** We ought to praise God for His infinite perfections. The Church praises Him unceasingly.

The *Gloria* and *Sanctus* in the Mass, the *Te Deum*, and the *Gloria Patri* are all prayers of praise. The Blessed Virgin praised God in the *Magnificat.* We must adore God as becomes reasonable human beings. Chain prayers are foolish.

2. To thank him for his favors.—This is the prayer of ***thanksgiving.*** All we have comes from God, and we are obliged to render Him thanks. Too many take His favors for granted, and neglect to thank Him.

Christ Himself complained when He healed ten lepers, for only one returned to give Him thanks (Luke 17:12-19). If somebody picks up a pencil we have dropped, we hasten to thank him with a smile; but for God Who made us and keeps us in health and happiness, we are stingy. A Te Deum is sung for occasions of solemn thanksgiving.

3. To obtain from Him the pardon of our sins, and the remission of their punishment.—This is the prayer of ***contrition.*** This is penitential prayer, as the *Miserere.* It is a form of petition, for by it we ask God to forgive us.

The good thief prayed: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). And how well and quickly he was rewarded! God never forgives our sins without contrition.

4. To ask for graces and blessings for ourselves and others.—This is the prayer of ***petition.*** God wishes us to ask Him for all that we need, spiritual or temporal. He is not ignorant of our needs; He knows them better than we do. But He prefers to have us ask Him, so that we may not take His favors for granted, but recognize our dependence.

Christ Himself used a prayer of petition in the Garden and on the Cross. The Christians prayed for the deliverance of Peter when he was in prison. "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

How should we pray?—We should pray:

1. With attention.—We should remember to Whom we are talking, and avoid deliberate *distractions.* Let us prepare ourselves before prayer. Let us assume a reverent posture, and forget earthly distractions.

To be properly attentive, we must pay attention to the words we say, and to God Who hears. In order to be pleasing to God, we must pray *in the name of Jesus* and in accordance with His will. We must therefore pray for whatever is for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The Church prays always in the name of Christ: "Through Christ our Lord." Our Lord promised: "If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23).

2. With a conviction of our own helplessness and our dependence upon God.—We should humbly *acknowledge* our nothingness, our unworthiness, and God's greatness.

"The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds" (Ecclus. 35:21). Remember how Christ praised the publican who humbly struck his breast and prayed: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." We are entirely dependent on God our Creator; whatever He refuses us, we cannot have. "Without me, you can do nothing." (John 15:5).

3. With a great desire for the graces we beg of Him.—It is *far from polite* to a fellowman to ask him for something and at the same time to act as if we did not care whether he granted our request or not. How much more reprehensible such an action would be before Almighty God!

To prove our great desire for the favor we ask, we must be sure to possess a pure heart, to be in the state of grace. Even the prayer of sinners is profitable, especially when they are sorry for their sins; but the purer our heart is, the better is God disposed to hear our petitions.

Who would have the temerity to enter a king's presence clad in filthy and torn garments? Yet in praying with an impure heart a man would be doing much worse—coming into the presence of God with a stained soul.

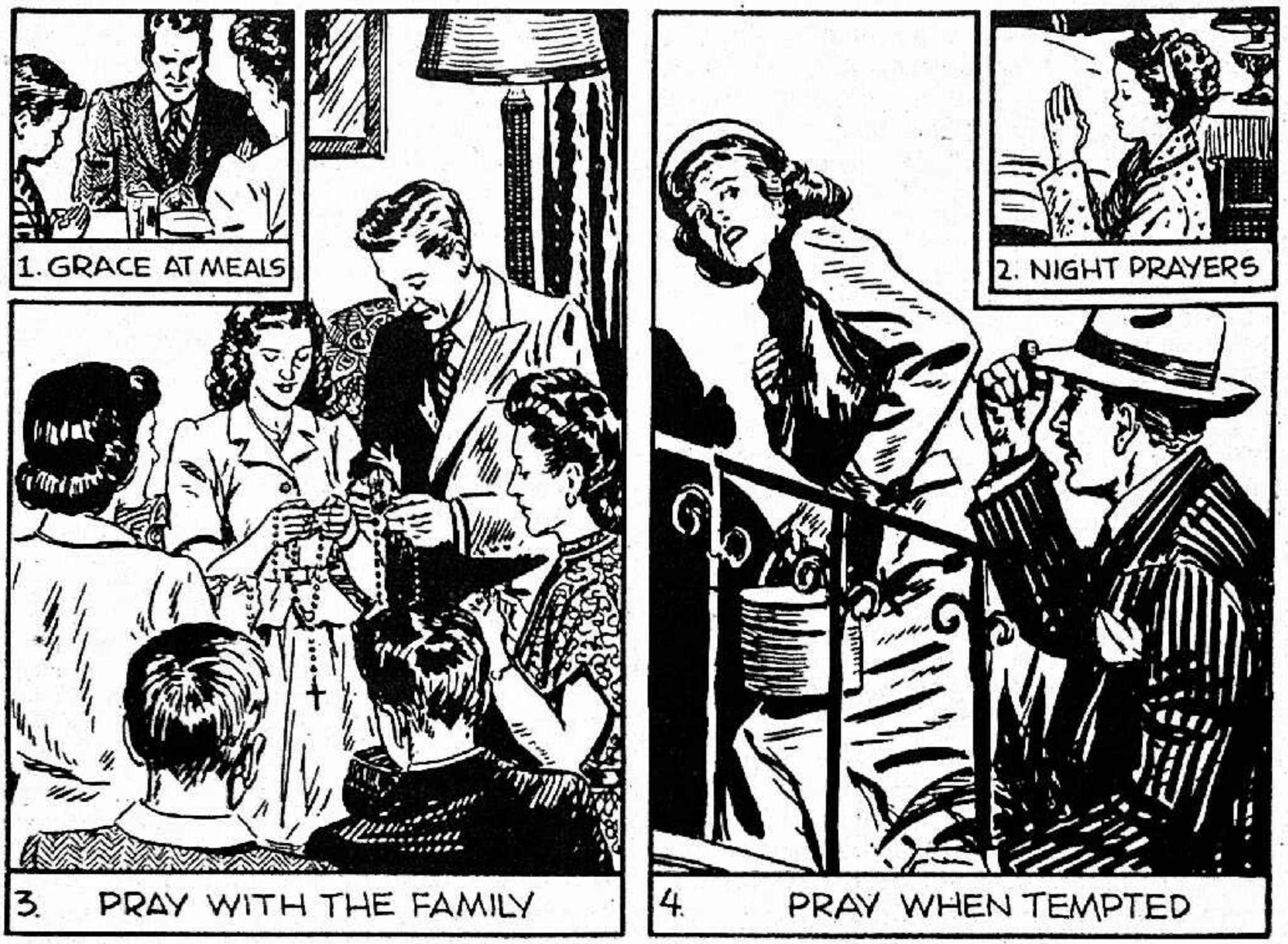
4. With loving trust in His goodness.—We should have confidence, filled with a firm belief that God will grant our prayer if it is for our good. God loves to see faith, confidence, and trust in our hearts. At the same time, we should be *resigned to God's will.* We must leave to God's good pleasure the granting or witholding of our wish, how and when He would grant it.

"Amen I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Arise, and hurl thyself into the sea,' and does not waver in his heart, but believes that whatever he says will be done, it shall be done for him" (Mark 11:23).

Our Lord prayed in the Garden: "Not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). He had asked that the chalice might pass from Him, but left the answering of the petition to His Heavenly Father. God knows best what is for our good. We ought not to dictate to Him how and when to answer our prayers.

5. With perseverance. — Even if our petition is not immediately granted, we should *not stop praying.* "We must always pray, and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1).

Our Lord Himself told the parable of the man who continued knocking, and thus actually forced his friend to give him what he wanted. St. Monica prayed for eighteen years for the conversion of her son; after that he became a Doctor of the Church and a great saint—St. Agustine. Our Lord also gave us the example in this; after having labored all day, He frequently passed the night in prayer.



We should make prayer a part of our life, and pray on all occasions. In particular we must not neglect to pray before and after meals (1), upon arising and retiring (2), before and after our work, and (4) when we are tempted. It is a beautiful custom to hold family prayers (3).

181. For Whom, When, and Where to Pray

For whom should we pray?—We should pray especially for ourselves, for our parents, relatives, friends and enemies, for sinners, for the souls in purgatory, for the Pope, bishops, and priests of the Church, and for the officials of our country.

1. We should pray for *ourselves,* for all our needs of soul and body.

We should particularly pray for those *whom we love:* our parents, brothers and sisters, friends and relatives, benefactors and superiors. But like the Saints, we must also pray for our enemies. And we must make reparation by praying for all whom we may have injured.

2. We should pray for the *Church,* for all its spiritual and temporal needs, that it may be established in all hearts, that pagans, heretics, and sinners may be converted.

We should say prayers for the Holy Father, our bishop, and our priests, that they may grow in the love of God in the faithful performance of their duties. We must pray for our departed brethren, the souls in purgatory, that they may see God soon.

3. We should pray for our *country* and our temporal rulers, that their power may be used for the good of the people and the glory of God.

We should always pray that *God's will may be done* by all, that virtue may flourish everywhere. "Pray for one another, that you may be saved. For the unceasing prayer of a just man is of great avail" (James 5:16).

How do we know that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly?—We know that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly, because Our Lord has promised: "If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you."

1. God *never forgets* a promise, and how often has He promised to answer prayer!

Our Lord promised: "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matt. 7:7). "All things whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). "Amen, amen, I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23). "Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done to you" (John 15:7).

2. God answers our prayers more quickly if they are accompanied by some *sacrifice* or mortification, to show our humility and earnestness. A prayer is more powerful with God if several *join* in the petition, and if those who pray are just.

"If two of you shall agree on earth about anything at all for which they ask, it shall be done for them by my Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19).

Why do we not always obtain what we pray for?—We do not always obtain what we pray for, either because we have not prayed properly, or because God sees that what we are asking would not be for our good.

In the latter case, God will grant us something better. No prayer is offered in vain. God is like a kind and wise father, who gives his child fruit instead of the knife he is crying for. "Everyone who asks, receives" (Matt. 7:8).

St. Ignatius said, "Pray as if all depended on God; work as if all depended on self." If we pray for favors or help, we must also do all we can to carry out our wishes. For example, if we pray for the recovery of a loved one, we must get the best medical help we can.

How many kinds of prayer are there?—There are two kinds of prayer: mental prayer and vocal prayer.

1. *Mental* prayer is that prayer by which we unite our hearts with God while thinking of His holy truths.

This kind of prayer is also called "meditation"; in it we spend the time thinking of God or of certain truths He has revealed, and by such meditation we hope to become better. Priests and religious have daily meditation.

2. *Vocal* prayer is that which comes from the mind and is spoken by the lips.

We can also *pray in song*, by means of hymns and other religious music. The public prayers of the Church are vocal. Vocal prayer is both useful and necessary. Our body, as well as our soul, must give homage to God. But praying with the lips alone, without the spirit, is worthless. That is "lip service".

May we use our own words in praying to God?—We may use our own words in praying to God, and it is well to do so often

In prayer, we may use authorized forms that we have learned, or we may speak to God in our own words according to the dictates of our heart. We should speak to God from time to time *in our own words*, for they seem more fitted to our needs and feelings than set forms. We should speak to Him like a child to its father. It is not necessary to say long prayers. God regards not the length, but the fervor: not the time spent, but the love.

Are distractions in our prayers always displeasing to God?—Distractions in our prayers are not displeasing to God, unless they are willful.

1. If we *try* to pray well and to keep distractions away, but in spite of all our efforts we do not succeed, God is not displeased.

A busy mother, even at prayer, may have an undercurrent of thought about the children's lunch. A businessman who has several important decisions to make would very likely be distracted in prayer.

2. Prayers said with *willful distractions* are of no benefit to us. They are like a phonograph record we play at God. Since with such "prayers" our hearts and minds do not go up to God, and our will is not in God, they cannot be true prayers.

It is sinful to pray with willful distractions. It is foolish, because it is only a waste of time, during which we finish nothing else anyway. Our Lord said, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8).

When and where should we pray?—We should pray always, and in all places.

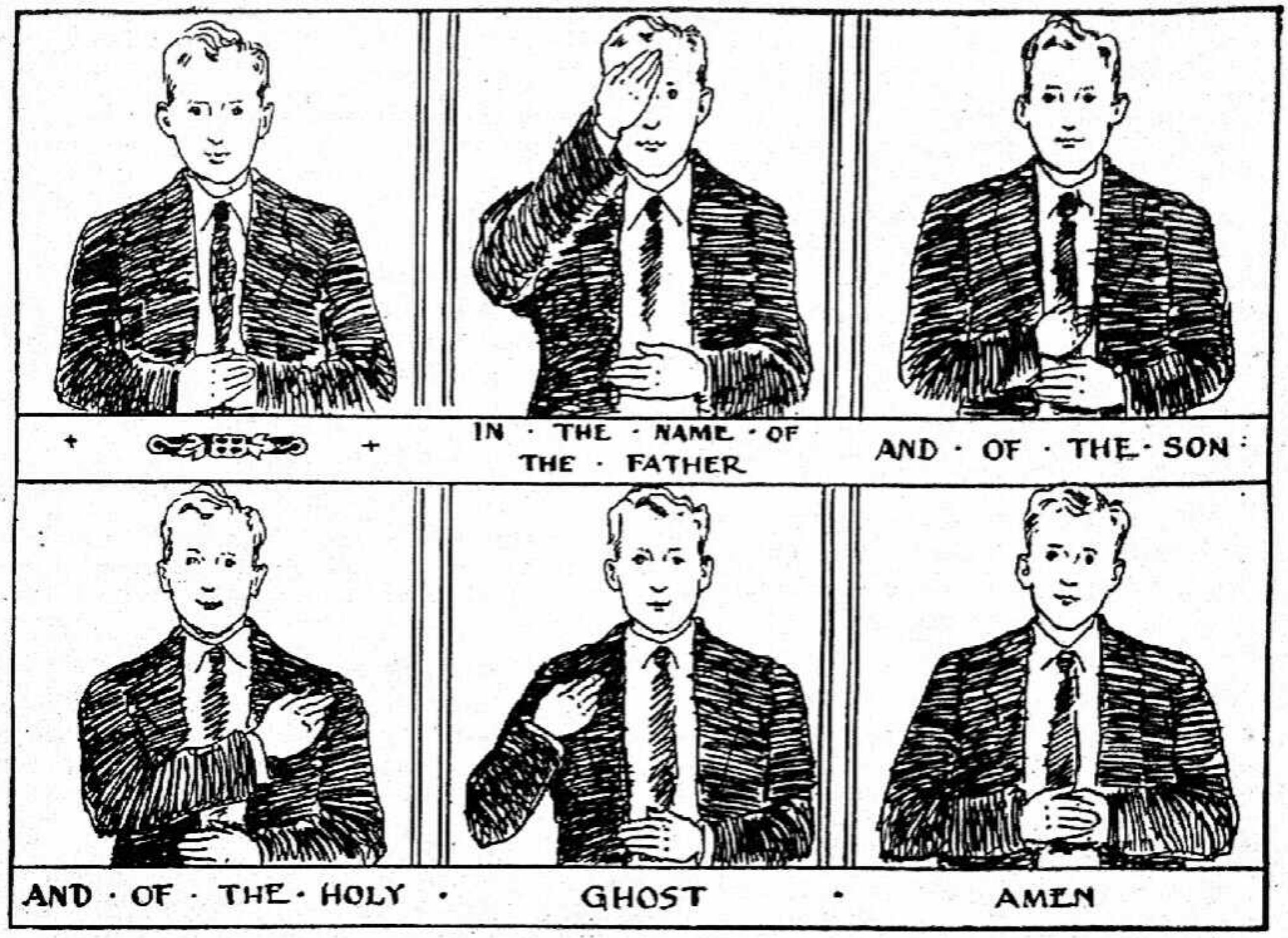
Christ said: "Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

1. Even when we are not on our knees, we should pray *while we work*. Even if it is mental work, we can stop once in a while to raise our hearts up to God. We should offer our work as a prayer to God, by directing our intention, and often renewing it.

Ejaculatory prayer, using short exclamations, is most helpful. Some good ejaculations are: "Blessed be God"; "All for Thee, my Jesus"; "My God and my all"; "Jesus, Mary, Joseph!"

2. We can pray at home, at work, in the company of others, even on the street. The *best place* to pray is in church, because it is the house especially consecrated to prayer.

We ought to say especially our *morning* and *night* prayers, grace at meals, and the Angelus three times a day. We should also pray when we are tempted, in misfortunes, danger, or need, and at the beginning of every important undertaking.



To make the sign of the cross (1) join the hands in preparation, putting yourself in the presence of God. (2) Lay the left hand on the breast, and with the extended fingers of the right hand touch the forehead, saying, "In the Name of the Father." (3) Touch the breast, saying: "And of the Son." (4) Touch the left shoulder, saying: "And of the Holy . . .;" then (5) the right shoulder, saying: "Ghost." Finally, (6) join the hands and say: "Amen."

182. The Sign of the Cross

How do we usually begin and end our prayers?—We usually begin and end our prayers with the sign of the cross.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14).

1. Nothing in the Church is begun, carried out, or completed, without the *sign of the cross.* It is used in innumerable blessings and ceremonials of the Church. At Mass alone it is used fifty-one times.

The sign of the cross is the most common way of confessing our faith. By it we can know Catholics from non-Catholics. It is believed that it had its origin in apostolic times.

2. We *make the sign* of the cross by touching with the outstretched fingers of the right hand the forehead, then the breast, and then the left and right shoulders, saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The sign should be made slowly, with great respect, as it is the sign of our salvation. The left hand should be laid across the breast.

3. *Another way* of making the sign of the cross is used at the two Gospels of the Mass. Then small signs of the cross are made with the thumb of the right hand on the forehead, on the lips, and on the breast. This was the sign the early Christians used under persecution, to avoid detection.

The sign on the forehead is intended to show our will to carry out Our Lord's teaching. The sign on the lips is intended to express our wish to profess

God. And the sign on the breast is a symbol of the love for Him that fills our heart.

4. In countries under *Spanish and Portuguese* influence, this sign of the cross is the one used:

With the thumb of the right hand a small cross is made on the forehead, meanwhile saying: *"By the sign of the holy Cross"*; then a small cross is made on the lips, while saying: *"from our enemies"*; then a small cross is made on the breast, while saying: *"deliver us, O Thou Lord our God"*; and finally with index and middle fingers a large sign of the cross is made, touching forehead, breast, and shoulders, saying: *"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* All these words are from the Roman Missal.

5. We should make the sign of the cross *especially* upon arising in the morning and retiring at night; before and after our prayers, meals and principal actions; and whenever we are tempted or in danger. Whenever we are blessed, at Mass, at Benediction, or elsewhere, we should make it.

It is customary to ask for a *priest's blessing* when he visits our home. We should then kneel and make the sign of the cross. An *indulgence* is attached to the sign of the cross. Every time we make it we gain 100 days' indulgence; if made with holy water, 300 days' indulgence.

Why do we make the sign of the cross?—We make the sign of the cross to express two important mysteries of the Christian religion, the Blessed Trinity and the Redemption.

1. When we say, "In the name," we express the truth that there is *only one God;* when we say, "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," we express the truth that there are *three distinct Persons* in God. And when we make the form of the cross on ourselves, we express the truth that the Son of God, made man, redeemed us by His death on the cross.

By this sign we confess that we *belong to the religion* of the crucified Saviour. By it a Catholic makes a clear confession of faith; by it he is known.

2. By means of the sign of the cross we obtain *God's blessing* and protection from dangers both spiritual and physical.

Of itself the sign of the cross is a blessing, besides a prayer for God's blessing. Since it is a sign of God and His crucified Son, the devil fears it, and it is a shield against temptation. The saints used to make the sign of the cross when evil thoughts assailed them; many Catholics today follow their example, and we should do the same. In doing so, we put a seal on our foreheads that proclaims, "I belong to Christ, the King of all."

3. The *Church* holds the sign of the cross in great reverence and honor. All our churches, schools and other institutions, altars, graves, and sacred vestments bear this sign. Churches are usually built in the form of the cross.

St. John Damascene said: "The sign of the Cross is a seal, at sight of which the destroying angel passes on, and does us no harm." It is the Christian counterpart of the blood of the lamb marking the doorposts of the Israelites. It is the sign of Christ, the symbol of our redemption.

What are the prayers that every Catholic should know by heart?—The prayers that every Catholic should know by heart are: the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the Confiteor, the Glory be to the Father, and the acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition.

In addition, every Catholic should know the Angelus, the Hail Holy Queen, grace before and after meals, a prayer to the guardian angel, one to St. Joseph, and Our Lady's *Memorare.*

1. The *Gloria Patri* (Glory be to the Father) is a prayer in honor of the Blessed Trinity. It is a prayer of praise, as well as an act of faith in the mystery of the Trinity.

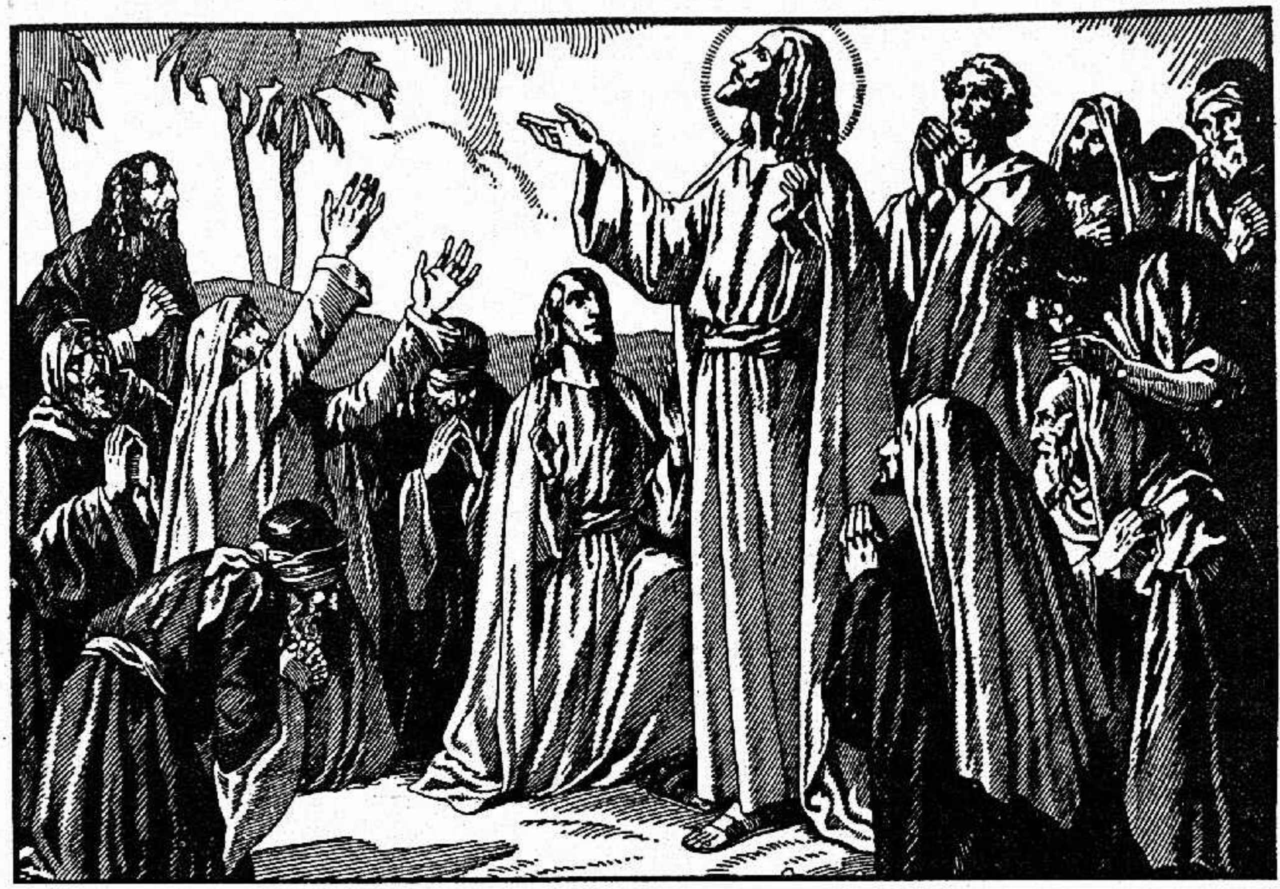
We should repeat the Glory be to the Father every time we receive a benefit from God, and in times of suffering and temptation. We should repeat it often, in acknowledgment of the chief mystery of the Catholic Faith, of the Blessed Trinity.

2. The *acts* of faith, hope, and charity are special prayers said in adoration of God. The act of contrition also honors God, because in asking for the pardon of sins, we acknowledge His power to condemn and to save. The *Confiteor* is the long form of the act of contrition, and is used at Mass.

Even when we are in the midst of work, we can often send up to God the adoration we feel by making very short acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. We might say, for instance, "Dear God, I believe in Thee; I hope in Thee; I love Thee with all my heart. I am sorry that I have offended Thee, because Thou art so good." For other occasions, we should also know by heart the longer forms.

3. By the *grace* before and after meals, we ask God's blessing on our food, and we thank Him for having given it to us.

One would think that everybody would be eager to give God this act of courtesy. Sad to say, many even among Catholics neglect to thank God for their daily food.



"And it came to pass as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray'" (Luke 11:1). Our Lord therefore taught His disciples the "Our Father."

Jesus continued: "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened (Luke 11:9-10).

183. The "Our Father"

Why is the "Our Father" the best of all prayers?—The Our Father is the best of all prayers because it is the Lord's Prayer, taught us by Jesus Christ Himself, a prayer of perfect and unselfish love.

1. The "Our Father" was taught by *Christ Himself* to us through His Apostles at their request. It has an introduction and seven petitions.

The *Our Father* contains *petitions* for all the needs of soul and body. It is at one and the same time a prayer of praise, petition, and contrition.

2. In the "Our Father" we not only pray in the name of Jesus, but in *His own words*. It is suited to every class and condition of men, from the simplest to the wisest.

Of this prayer more than of any other Our Lord's promise holds good: "If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23).

3. In saying the "Our Father" we offer ourselves entirely to God and ask from Him the best things, not only for ourselves, but also for our neighbor. No prayer means so much in so few words.

Why do we address God as *"Our Father Who art in heaven"*?—We address God as "Our Father Who art in heaven", because we belong to Him, our loving Father, Who created us and watches over us, Who adopts us through sanctifying grace as His children and Who destines us to live for ever with Him in heaven, our true home.

1. "Our Father Who art in heaven" is the *introduction*. In it Our Lord taught us to be as little children, calling God "Father."

Thus we show our love of and confidence in Him. We say "Our" and not "My" because we pray not only for ourselves, but for all men. "We are sons of God" (Rom. 8:16).

2. We say, "Who art in heaven" to remind ourselves that in heaven is God's throne, and there also is *our true Home.*

"In my Father's house there are many mansions" (John 14:2).

For what do we pray when we say *"hallowed be Thy name"*?—When we say "hallowed be Thy name," we pray that God may be known and honored by all men.

This is the first petition. It is placed first to teach us that we should put the *glory of God first* above all things else. "Praise ye the name of the Lord" (Ps. 112:1).

For what do we pray when we say *"Thy kingdom come"*?—When we say "Thy kingdom come," we pray that the kingdom of God's grace may be spread throughout the world, that all men may come to know and to enter the true Church and to live as worthy members of it, and that, finally, we all may be admitted to the kingdom of God's glory.

This is the second petition in the *Our Father.* We here acknowledge God to be the *King and Lord* of creation. We ask that all may recognize Him as such, that He may extend His care and providence to all, that His kingdom on earth, the Church, may spread, and that we may have eternal life after death.

For what do we pray when we say *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"*?—When we say "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we pray that all men may obey God on earth as willingly as the saints and angels obey Him in heaven.

This is the third potition. By it we pray for help to fulfill all the desires, the will of God. We should do God's will by being faithful to His commands, and by being patient and resigned under trials, for no pain can befall us without God's permission. "He who does the will of my Father shall enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

For what do we pray when we say *"Give us this day our daily bread"*?—When we say "Give us this day our daily bread," we pray that God will give us each day all that is necessary to support the material life of our bodies and the spiritual life of our souls.

This is the fourth petition. The word "daily" shows that we are expected to ask every day, for the "bread" we ask for is only for one day. We are permitted to ask for *temporal favors,* provided they are not contrary to God's will.

For what do we pray when we say *"and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"*?—When we say "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we pray that God will pardon the sins by which we have offended Him, and we tell Him that we pardon our fellow men who have offended us.

This is the fifth petition. By it we *agree to pardon* in the same manner as God forgives us, all who have offended us. Thus we cannot expect God to forgive us if we do not forgive others. "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses. But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses" (Matt. 6:14-15).

For what do we pray when we say *"and lead us not into temptation"*?—When we say "and lead us not into temptation," we pray that God will always give us the grace to overcome the temptations to sin which come to us from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

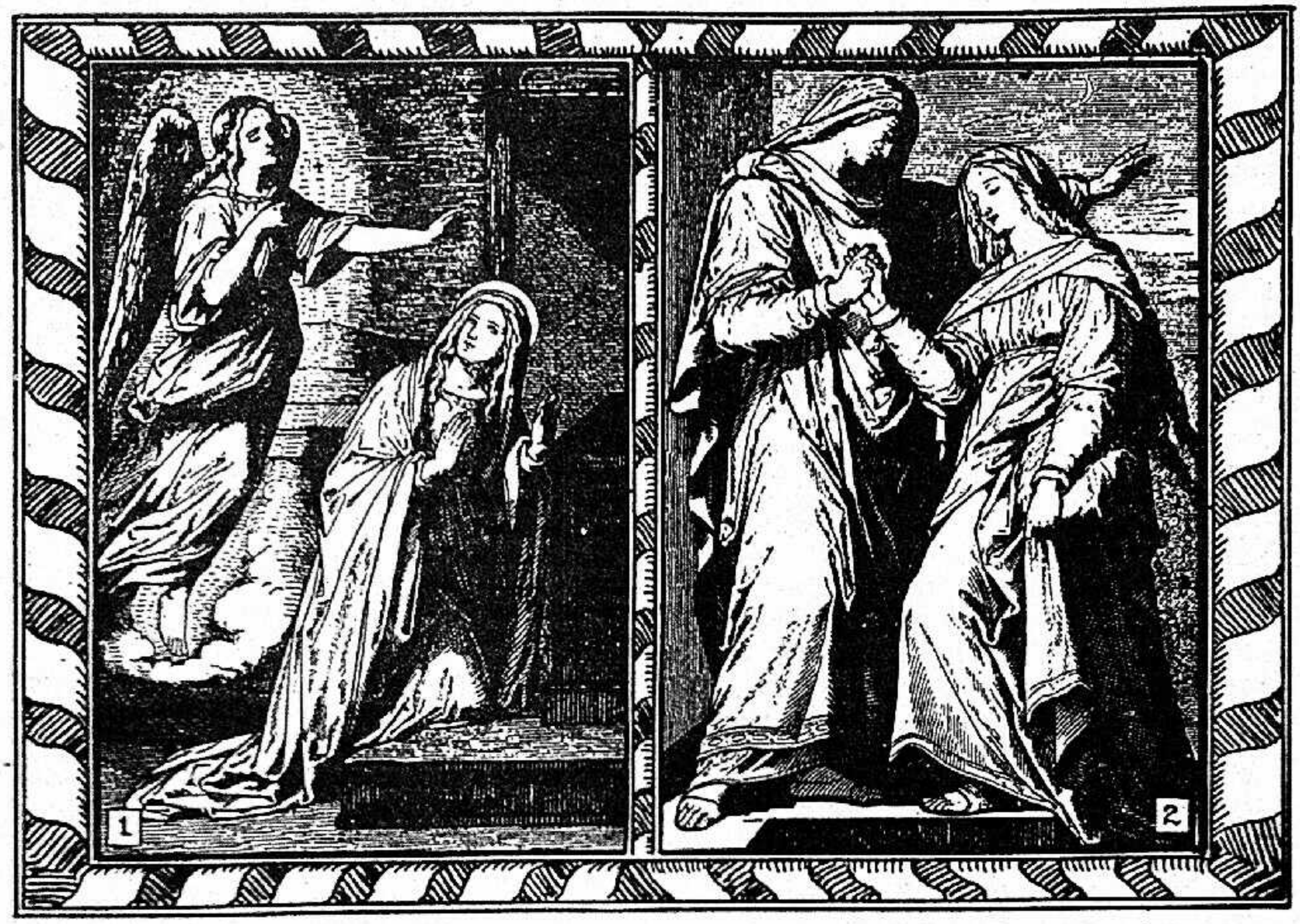
This is the sixth petition. Temptations come to us (1) from the *world,* other people and things of this earth full of vanities; (2) from the *flesh,* that is, from our own weak and corrupted nature; and (3) from the devil, the evil one whose only joy is in dragging souls to sin. We must do our part in resisting temptation by being vigilant against it, and by avoiding the occasions of sin. "Pray, that you may not enter into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). "God is faithful, and will not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength" (1 Cor. 10:13).

For what do we pray when we say *"but deliver us from evil"*?—When we say "but deliver us from evil," we pray that God will always protect us from harm, and especially from harm to our souls.

This is the seventh and last petition in the Our Father. It implores God to save us from all harm to soul and body, especially from *sin.*

What is meant by the word *"Amen"* with which we end the "Our Father"?—By the word "Amen" with which we end the *Our Father,* is meant "So it is," or "So be it"; the word expresses our confidence that all our petitions will be granted.

In the "Our Father" of the Mass, *Amen* is said by the priest, to indicate it as the answer of God to the petitions, meaning: "Be assured that I hear your prayer."



1. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And . . . he said, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:27-28).

2. Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth: "And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 1:41-42). When we pray the "Hail Mary," these two beautiful events come to mind.

184. Prayers to Mary

Which are the principal prayers to the Blessed Virgin?—The principal prayers to the Blessed Virgin are: the "Hail Mary", the "Hail Holy Queen", the *Angelus*, the Rosary, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin or Litany of Loretto.

What is the first part of the Hail Mary?—The first part of the Hail Mary is: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

1. The first part of the Hail Mary is a prayer of *praise*. It is composed of (a) the words of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary; and (b) the words of St. Elizabeth to Mary. Because the prayer begins with the words of the Angel, the "Hail Mary" is in English termed the *Angelical Salutation*. It is called *Ave Maria* in Latin.

The angel Gabriel said: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28). The words of St. Elizabeth are "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 1:42).

2. The first two words, *"Hail Mary"*, mean: *I salute thee*. By this we testify our reverence for our Blessed Mother and congratulate her on her privileges.

'He has regarded the loveliness of his handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed'. (Luke 1:48).

3. *"Full of grace"* means that Mary is the most holy and exalted of all creatures, possessed of all graces and gifts of God.

She is the only one of all mortals that was conceived free from all stain of original sin. This is why we speak of Mary's *Immaculate Conception.* "Thou art all fair, and there is not a spot in thee" (Cant. 4:7).

4. *The Lord is with thee"* signifies that although all good persons are united with God, Mary in a special manner is more closely united with Him in love and power.

Mary was united with God even on earth in the closest union; she was like a tabernacle containing God, except that while the tabernacle only shelters Our Lord, her spirit and His were one, and even her blood and His were one.

5. *"Blessed art thou among women"* means that Mary has been privileged among all women, being the Mother of the Son of God. She is therefore higher in holiness, grace, and glory than any other woman.

Mary was blessed because the Son born of her brought her blessings. She is blessed as one who cooperated in the salvation of men; even on earth, she received the homage of angels and men.

6. *"And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus"* means that Mary is blessed because of her Son. All her glory and power come from Him, God who became her Son.

Mary is like a tree that bears good fruit; can any fruit be better than the Son of God? So touched was a woman by the holiness of that Son that she raised up her voice in praise: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that nursed thee" (Luke 11:27).

What is the second part of the Hail Mary?—The second part of the Hail Mary is: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death."

1. The second part of the Hail Mary is a prayer of *petition,* and was composed by the Church. In it we entreat Mary's intercession.

Mary, of all human beings, shared most in the bitter sufferings of her Son for the salvation of men. She cannot be deaf to our petitions to help us attain eternal salvation. She knows what her Son suffered for us.

2. *"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners."* We call ourselves sinners, for no man, except the Blessed Virgin, can be free from all sin. Knowing what power a mother, and especially the Mother of God, has over her Son, we beg Mary to pray for us.

There is no sinner fallen so low that she will refuse to entreat mercy for him if he is contrite. Mary loves sinners as Jesus loves them, and rejoices when they return to God.

3. In the words: *"Now and at the hour of our death"* we ask of Mary to obtain for us during life the gift of the love of God, and at the hour of death that help we shall need to enable us to save our soul.

The hour of death is the time above all times when we need help most. At that hour we may probably be racked by physical suffering which tempts us to forget God; we may very likely be attacked by the devil, by temptation when we are weakest. We may be overwhelmed by a fear of God. And so we plead with Mary to obtain for us the graces we shall need.

What is the "Hail Holy Queen"?—The *Hail Holy Queen* or *Salve Regina* is one of the most common prayers to Mary, composed in the year 100 by Blessed Herman.

St. Bernard added the words at the end: "O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!"

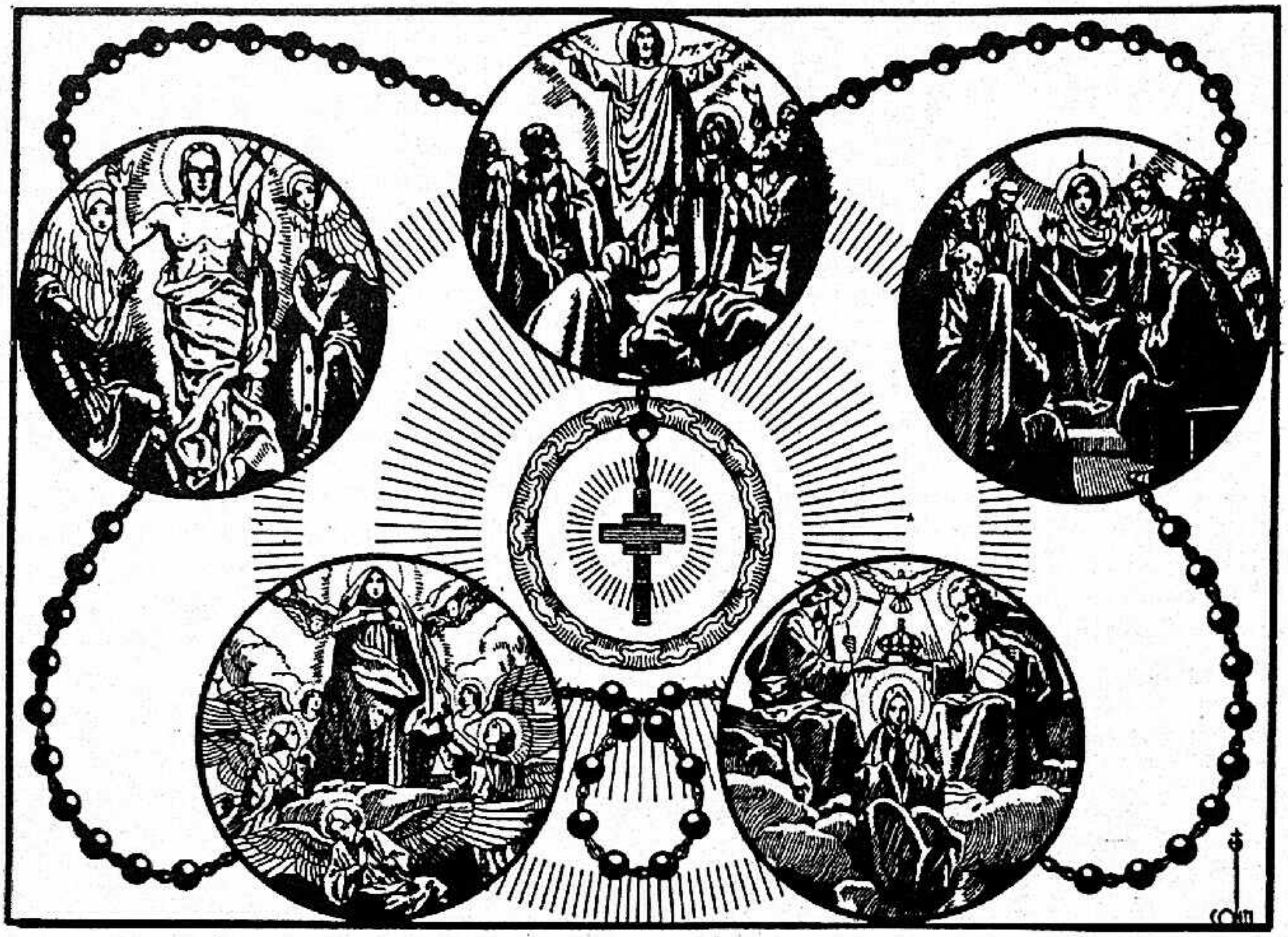
What is the "Angelus"?—The Angelus is a prayer recited morning, noon, and evening, in honor of Mary and of the mystery of the Incarnation.

1. This prayer is called the *Angelus,* because its first word in Latin is "Angelus" meaning Angel. In the Easter season, the *Regina Coeli* is substituted for the Angelus; both prayers are richly indulgenced.

The custom of ringing the bell for the Angelus dates from the eleventh century, during the Crusades, to admonish the faithful to pray for the victory of the crusaders.

2. For the Angelus, the *bell* is rung thrice three separate times, with an interval of about half a minute each, while the verse and an Ave Maria are being said. Then, for the longer prayer, the bell is rung continuously. The Angelus is supposed to be recited kneeling except from Saturday noon to Sunday evening inclusive; but this is not of obligation for gaining the indulgence.

The words of the Angelus, with explanations, are as follows: (1) *The Angel of the Lord* (Gabriel the Archangel) *declared unto Mary* (announced to Mary the birth of the Son of God). *And she conceived of the Holy Ghost* (and she became, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, the Mother of Jesus). *Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word.* (By the consent Mary gave in these words, God the Son came from heaven and became incarnate in her womb). *And the Word* (God the Son) *was made flesh* (became man). *And dwelt among us* (and lived on earth for thirty-three years, our Saviour and Lord).



The Rosary is divided into the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious mysteries. In the joyful mysteries, we meditate on: (1) the Annunciation; (2) The Visitation; (3) The Birth of Jesus; (4) The Presentation; and (5) The Finding in the Temple. In the sorrowful mysteries we meditate on (1) The Agony in the Garden; (2) The Scourging; (3) The Crown of Thorns; (4) The Carrying of the Cross, and (5) The Crucifixion. In the glorious mysteries we meditate on (1) The Resurrection; (2) The Ascension; (3) The Descent of the Holy Ghost; (4) The Assumption; and (5) The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin.

185. The Rosary

What is the Rosary?—The Rosary is a prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin, consisting of one hundred and fifty *Hail Marys* and fifteen *Our Fathers* accompanied by meditation on the life, passion, and glory of Christ.

1. In the *first centuries* of Christianity there were many hermits who could not read the psalms in the psalter. So they used to substitute one Our Father and one Hail Mary for each psalm. To note the number, they made use of stones, or seeds strung on a cord.

The word *rosary* means a garland or wreath of roses. Each prayer said in the Rosary is a spiritual rose offered to our Blessed Mother.

2. *St. Dominic* was the first to make general the custom of substituting 150 Hail Marys for the 150 Psalms.

When, in the thirteenth century, heresy ravaged southern France and northern Italy, the Holy Father appointed St. Dominic to preach against the heretical doctrines. When, after exerting a great deal of effort, Dominic saw very little results, he prayed to the Blessed Virgin, and used the rosary as a means for the conversion of the heretics. By this method, which was everywhere welcomed, his campaign became a complete success.

3. The Rosary is a powerful prayer to obtain the grace of God through the *intercession* of the Blessed Virgin. How innumerable are the conversions, known and unknown, which had their beginning in the devotion of the Rosary! Priests and religious as well as other devout Christians make a practice of reciting it daily.

In times of danger and calamity, the Rosary has been the means by which miraculous aid has been obtained. This was the case in the wars with the Turks, the victory of Lepanto (1571), and the deliverance of Vienna (1683). It was in thanksgiving for these victories over the Mohammedans that the Holy Father instituted the feast of the Holy Rosary on the first Sunday of October.

3. The very *simplicity* of the Rosary makes it a prayer for children. For this reason it is the prayer of the little and the humble, and most pleasing in the eyes of God.

One of the devotees of the Rosary was that great missionary, Saint Francis Xavier. Wherever he went, he preached this devotion. However busy or fatigued he was, he never omitted saying the Rosary every day. He used to carry his rosary around his neck openly, in honor of the Blessed Mother.

4. At the same time the rosary is a prayer of *contemplation:* the truths discovered from meditation on the mysteries presented can never be exhausted by even the most learned.

Frequently St. Francis Xavier was called to distant missions to attend the sick and administer the sacraments to the dying. As it was impossible for him to attend to so many at one time, he used to send rosaries to the sick, advising them to pray and if they could not, to wear the beads around their neck. He assured the sick that they would either improve altogether or feel better, till he could arrive, so that they should not die without the sacraments. This promise was always complied with; the patients using the rosary as St. Francis Xavier recommended were always given time to live at least until the holy missionary arrived and administered the Last Sacraments.

How is the Rosary said?—Ordinarily, only one-third of the Rosary is said: fifty Hail Marys and five Our Fathers prayed on a string of beads slipped through the fingers.

The Rosary combines vocal with mental prayer. It is a summary of the most important parts of the Gospels, a most useful and powerful prayer. Catholics should not fail to say at least five decades of the Rosary each day.

1. Ordinarily, we *begin* the Rosary by saying the Apostles' Creed. Then we say one Our Father, three Hail Marys, and one Glory be to the Father for the increase of faith, hope and charity. This is the introduction, but it is not necessary for the gaining of the indulgence.

Many indulgences are attached to the Rosary. For every Our Father and Hail Mary an indulgence of five hundred days may be gained, if said on a properly indulgenced rosary.

2. We say the Our Fathers on the large beads and the Hail Marys on the small beads. One Our Father, and the ten Hail Marys following, are called a *decade.* Five decades make the *chaplet* of beads. It is customary to close each decade with a *Glory be to the Father.*

While reciting the Rosary, everyone must hold his own rosary in his hand, and touch the beads as he says the prayers. If several are saying the Rosary together, only one need have a rosary in his hand, to regulate the number of prayers.

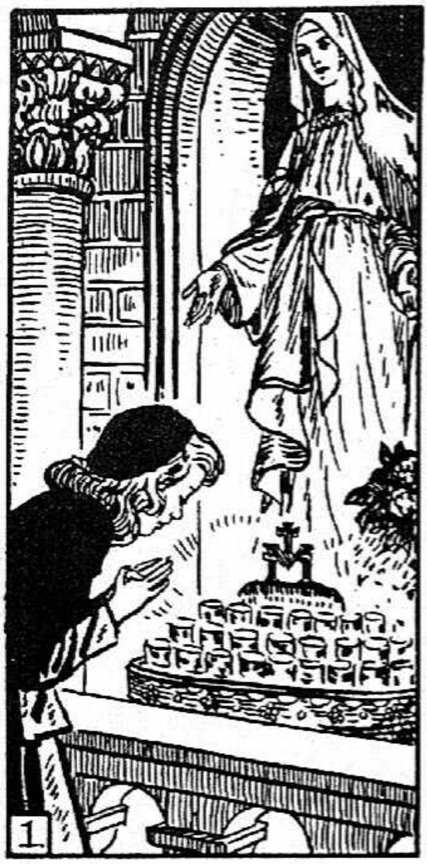
3. While we say each decade, we should *meditate* upon one mystery of our faith. The Rosary is divided into the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious mysteries, each honoring respectively the life, the passion, and the glorification of Our Lord.

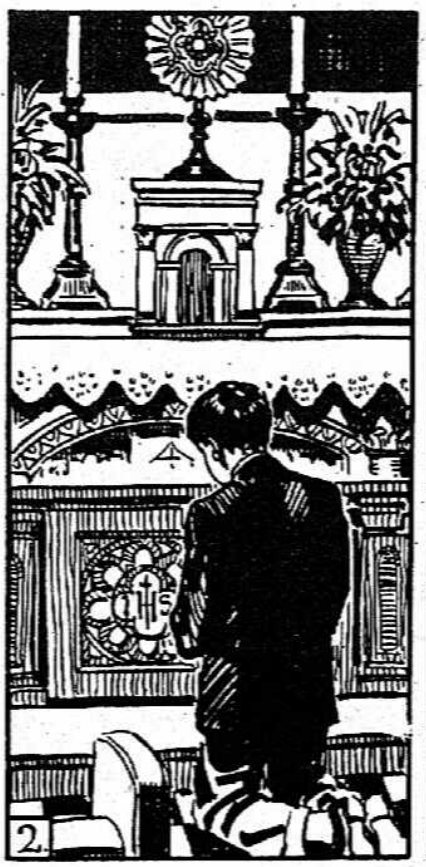
The objection is often made by non-Catholics that the Rosary is not a praiseworthy prayer because in it one prayer, the Hail Mary, is repeated so often. In reply to this objection we would say that one who has a feeling much at heart generally repeats over and over certain words that give expression to that feeling. Note a child begging for something. Besides, this practice has Holy Scripture itself, and even Our Lord, for a model: in the Psalms, the words "His mercy endureth forever" are repeated in only one psalm as many as twenty-seven times; the angels intimate that their song of "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts" is unceasing; in the Garden, Our Lord repeated His prayer.

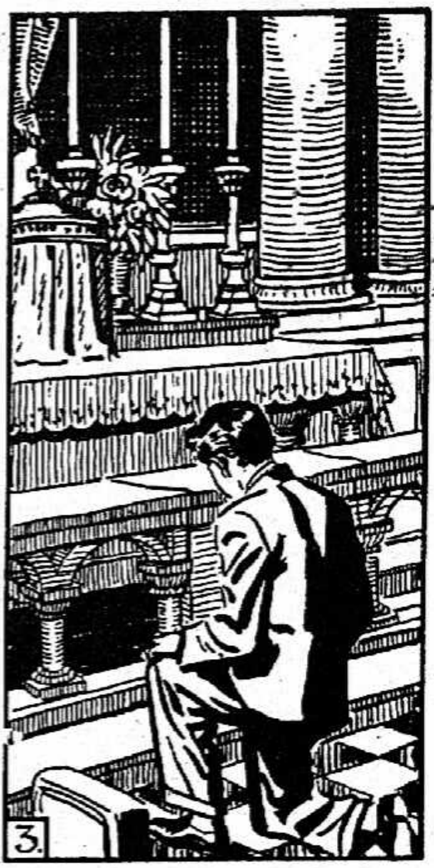
What is the Litany of the Blessed Virgin?—The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is a prayer in which the most glorious titles are given to the Mother of God, as her intercession is invoked.

The Litany is a succession of glorious and symbolic salutations. In it we call her *Mystical Rose,* because the beauty of her soul fulfilled the prophecy, "I was exalted like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho" (Ecc. 24:18). We address her as *Tower of David* and *Tower of Ivory,* because she rises up above all men in beauty and strength of soul. She is called *House of Gold* because God Himself dwelt within her as in a Temple. She is the *Ark of the Covenant,* because as it contained the tables of the Mosaic Law, so she contained the Lawgiver of all, God. She is invoked as the *Gate of Heaven,* because through her we enter the heavenly kingdom. She is our *Morning Star* that lights our way Home, to God.

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is often said to end the Rosary. This Litany is also called the Litany of Loretto, named after the Italian town of Loretto, where the holy house of Nazareth now stands.







1. When we pass before an image of Our Lord, our Lady, or the Saints, we should show our reverence by bowing before it.

2. Upon entering or leaving the place where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, or while Holy Communion is being distributed, we should make a double genuflection, *that is, kneel on both knees and bow, in adoration of God, there before us.*

3. When we enter or leave the church, or pass before the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, we should genuflect on the right knee as an act of adoration to our hidden Lord. In genuflecting, the knee should touch the floor, and not merely be bent.

186. Religious Practices

What kinds of religious practices are observed in the Church?—There are two kinds of religious practices observed in the Church: the ordinary and the extraordinary.

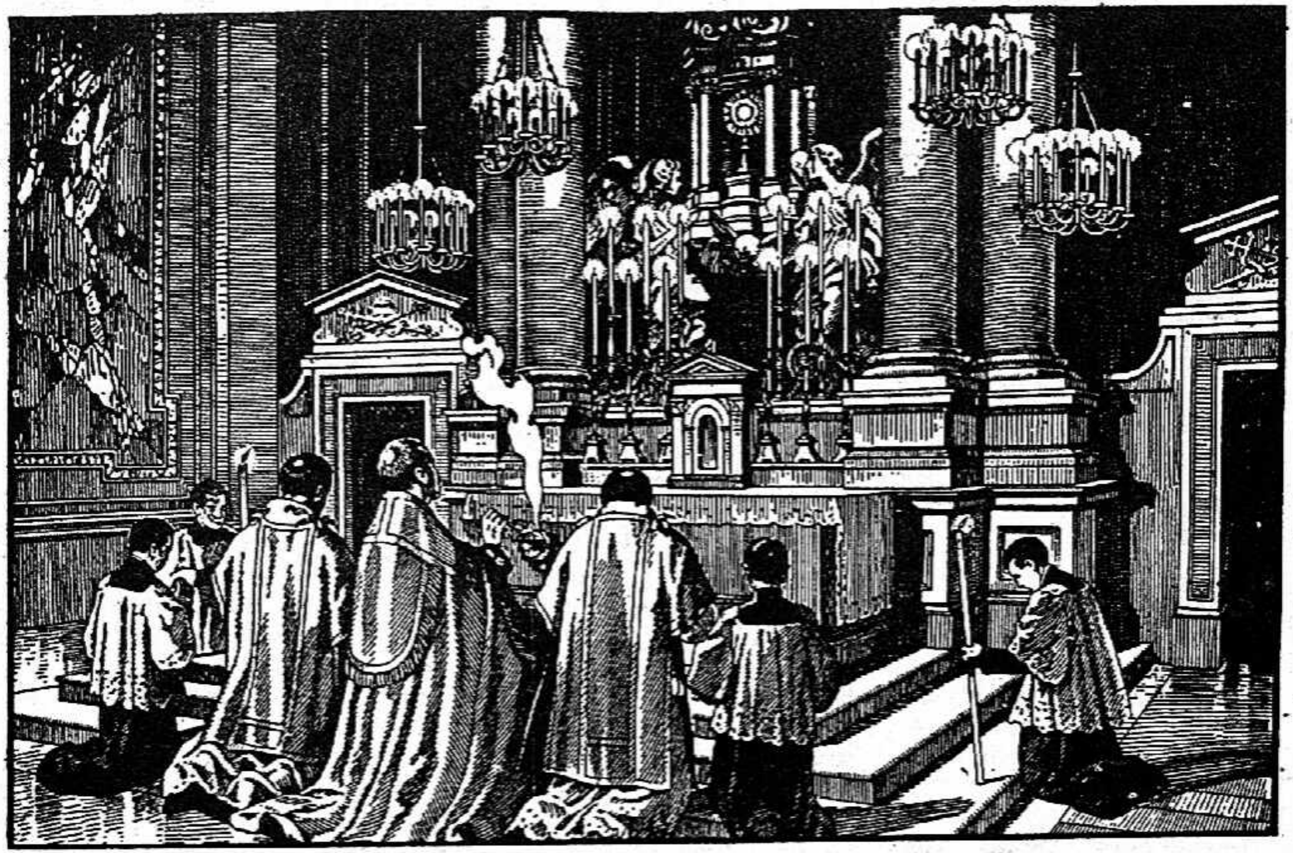
1. The ordinary practices take place at regularly appointed times. They are the *regular services* held in the parish church on Sundays and holydays, and during weekdays, both in the morning and in the afternoon.

On Sundays and holydays, in all parish churches one or more Masses are said, according to the number of priests and the size of the parish. At each of those Masses a sermon is preached. In many parishes, there are special services, such as the recital of the Rosary, or benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. On weekdays one or more Masses are said. Especially in May, June, and October, there is usually exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the recital of the Rosary. Masses are said in the afternoon with the approval of the bishop.

2. The extraordinary or *special devotions* take place only on special occasions. Some of them are: Benediction, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Way of the Cross, processions, novenas, missions and retreats, congresses, devotion to the Sacred Heart, etc.

In what does the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus consist?—The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus consists in acts of love and reparation for the many offenses committed against Him.

1. Since Jesus Christ is both God and man, His *humanity,* being inseparable from His divinity, is worthy of adoration. This adoration is not aimed at the human nature, but at the divine person of Christ. In a



Every time the Blessed Sacrament is solemnly exposed, we should spend some time in prayer before It. At the end of the exposition the Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament is given. At the moment of the benediction, we should look at the Sacred Host, and say: "My Lord and My God", then bow down in adoration and make the sign of the Cross.

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similar manner, when we kiss our mother's hand, we do not pay our respect to her flesh, but to her as our parent.

Although devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was known in ancient times, it became widesperad as a result of the revelations Our Lord made to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, towards the end of the seventeenth century. Through her, He made *twelve promises* to those who should practice the devotion to His Sacred Heart.

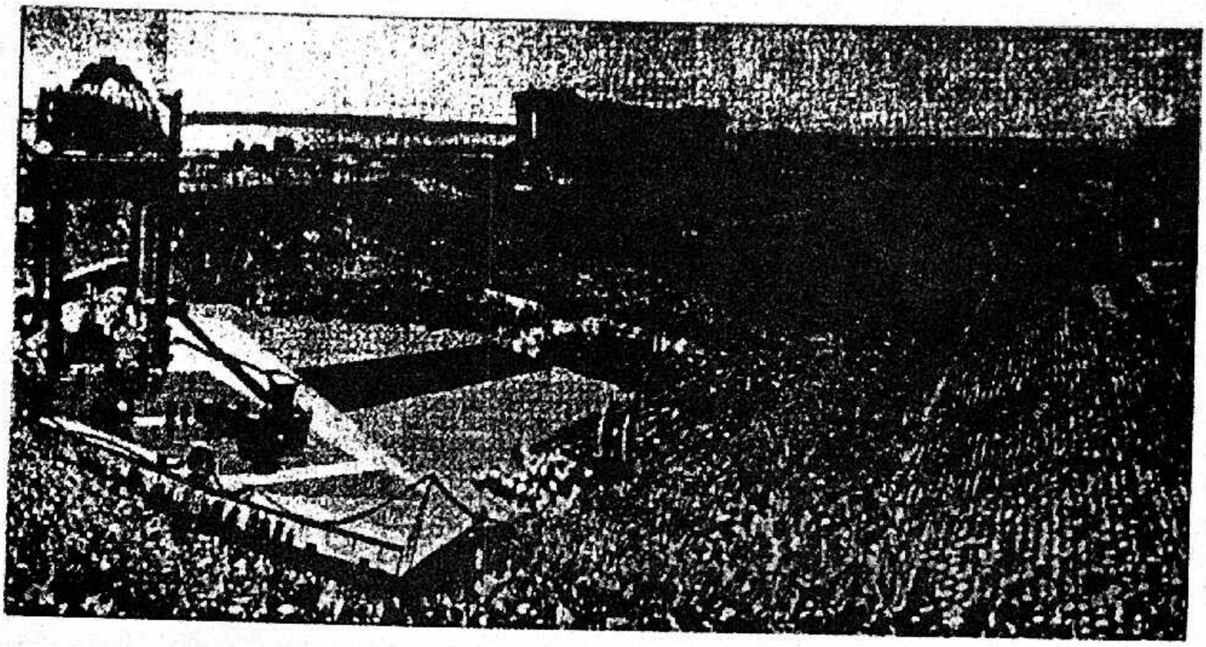
2. Among the *twelve promises* of Our Lord in favor of the devotees of His Heart is: "I promise in the excess of the mercy of My Heart, that its all-powerful love will grant to all those who *receive communion on the first Friday of every month for nine consecutive months* the grace of final repentance, and that they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without the sacraments, and that My Heart shall be their secure refuge at that last hour."

The First Friday devotion arose from this promise of Our Lord, especially the devotion of the *nine First Fridays.* When we venerate the Sacred Heart, we should remember His great love for us, flowing out of that Heart, and try to make some return for that love.

3. In order to make this devotion of the nine First Fridays well, we should make a very good confession and receive Holy Communion, *offering all* that we are and all that we have to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Everybody should make this devotion at least once, for himself. The promise is made by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and He always carries out His promises.

The whole *month of June* is consecrated to the Sacred Heart. In many churches every day in June, the Rosary is recited and the Litany of the Sacred Heart said. The devotion to the Sacred Heart has brought about precious results. It has encouraged the practice of frequent Communion. No Catholic home should be without an image of the Sacred Heart prominently displayed.

Other devotions to Our Lord Jesus Christ are: those to His Passion, to the Holy Name, to the Five Wounds, and to the Precious Blood.



The 28th International Eucharistic Congress, held in Chicago in June 1926, was one of the greatest religious events in the history of our country.

The Congress was held in Soldiers' Field, an immense stadium with a capacity of 350,000. Twelve Cardinals, over 500 Archbishops and Bishops, six thousand Priests, ten thousand Sisters, and hundreds of thousands of people gathered in Chicago for four days to honor Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist.

On the last day the solemn procession took place on the grounds of the large Seminary of Mundelein. Over 900,000 faithful gathered to honor Our Eucharistic Lord. The Cardinal Legate of the Holy Father carried the sacred monstrance. This Congress of devotion and prayer struck a contrast to the usual commercial and busy life of that great city. Even the President of the United States sent his personal representative.

Every two years or so the Catholic world gathers in such an International Congress to honor Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. The latest Congresses have been: Carthage in 1930, Dublin in 1932, Buenos Aires in 1934, Manila in 1937, Budapest in 1938, and Barcelona in 1952. The next Congress is scheduled for Rio de Janeiro in 1956. It is considered a great honor for a city to be chosen for an International Eucharistic Congress. Different nations always vie for the honor of standing hosts to our Blessed Lord during an International Congress.

The illustration is a view of the Women's Day during the International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago in 1926.

187. Devotions to the Blessed Sacrament

Which are the most important devotions to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament?—The most important devotions to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament are: visits, Benediction, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Forty Hours' Devotion, and Eucharistic Congresses.

1. We should make *visits* to honor Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. If possible, we should make at least one daily visit. When passing a church, we should go in, if only for half a minute, to greet Him, Who always waits patiently and eagerly for us.

Cardinal Bellarmine, while still a student, used to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament every time he passed a church. When he was asked why he did this, he answered, "It would be ill manners to go by a friend's house without a word of greeting." The church door is always open to admit us, a constant invitation to us to visit Our Lord Who calls, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

2. *Benediction* of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion during which the Holy Eucharist is exposed, prayers are said, and the blessing is given. It usually lasts from ten minutes to half an hour.

When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, the *Salutaris Hostia* or *Ave Verum* is usually sung. Just before the blessing is given, the *Tantum Ergo* is sung. The Blessed Sacrament is incensed when first exposed, and during the *Tantum Ergo*.

3. *Exposition* of the Blessed Sacrament

consists in placing the sacred Host in a monstrance at some height above the altar for the adoration of the faithful. The Blessed Sacrament is solemnly exposed *on certain occasions*, as after the parochial Mass, in the afternoon services on Sundays and holydays, on the feast of Corpus Christi, etc. The number of lighted tapers, unless there be special concession, must not be less than twelve. During the exposition, someone must *always be on guard* in the church.

An all-night vigil is kept before the Blessed Sacrament in the Repository on the night of Holy Thursday. In many places an all-night vigil is also held on New Year's Eve.

It is usual, except for extraordinary cases, to pray before the solemnly exposed Sacrament *on our knees*. If it is discourteous to sit in the presence of an earthly king, how much more is it before the Son of God!

4. The *Forty Hours' Devotion* is a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, in memory of the forty hours during which the Body of Jesus stayed in the Holy Sepulchre, after His burial on Good Friday up to His resurrection on Easter.

The devotion lasts forty hours, during which relays of adorers take turns offering prayers and meditation to Christ in the Blessed Eucharist solemnly exposed. The devotion begins on the first day with Holy Mass, in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. At the end of the Mass there is a solemn procession, and the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the throne at the high altar. The devotion ends with another Mass. During the forty hours, no requiem Masses may be said in the church.

What is a Eucharistic Congress?—A Eucharistic Congress is a gathering of Catholics which convenes for the purpose of giving public adoration to the Eucharist.

The first Eucharistic Congress was held at Lille, France, on June 21, 1881.

1. These congresses aim to *promote devotion* to our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, to honor Him in the memorial He left us. They aim to discuss means by which to make known Christ's gift to men. They may be local, provincial, diocesan, national, or international. National Congresses are held in a number of nations every few years.

The exercises of the congress include daily Masses attended by all the participants, daily communions, conferences, etc. Sometimes the participants are divided into various sections for better discussions and organization.

2. The most important of these congresses is the *International Eucharistic Congress*. It was started in 1892 and takes place every two years. The place is selected by a permanent committee with the approbation of the Holy Father. It is customary for the Pope to appoint a Legate, usually a Cardinal, to International Congresses; he presides over the most important functions as the representative of the Holy Father.

These international congresses, attended by hundreds of thousands, are most *pleasing to Our Lord* in the Eucharist. This satisfaction He shows by the fruitful results of such congresses. The spiritual life of the participants is renewed; and not rarely many who have become indifferent to the Faith renew their fervor. The spectacle of the devotion and piety of so many adoring the Sacrament is an edifying spectacle to non-Catholics, thousands of whom are converted. The nation selected for the congress is specially blessed.

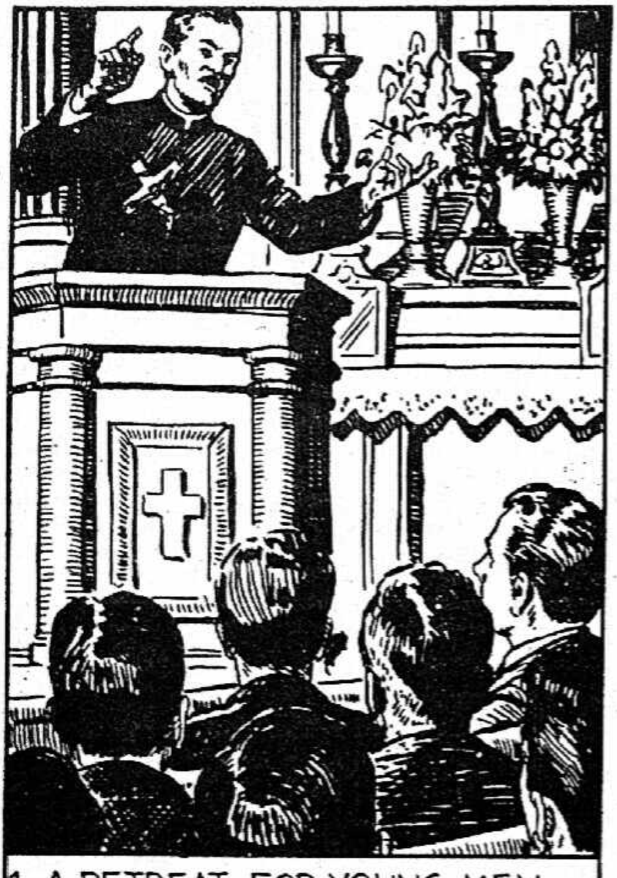
3. The latest International Eucharistic Congresses have been: Rome in 1922, Amsterdam in 1924, Chicago in 1926, Sydney in 1928, Carthage in 1930, Dublin in 1932, Buenos Aires in 1934, Manila in 1937, and Budapest in 1938. It is surely a signal honor for a city to be chosen seat of an International Eucharistic Congress. The 35th International Congress was to have been held in Nice, France, in 1940, but was suspended because of the war.

Of the latest International Eucharistic Congresses, that of Manila was probably the most international, pilgrims coming to represent fifty-four nations of Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Australia. On the last day, the solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament took place along Dewey Boulevard by the sea, winding up at the monumental altar on the New Luneta. It is officially estimated that over 600,000 people gathered for this last ceremony to honor our Eucharistic Lord.

What are Catholic Congresses?—Catholic Congresses are public conferences or gatherings of Catholics, for either devotional or practical purposes.

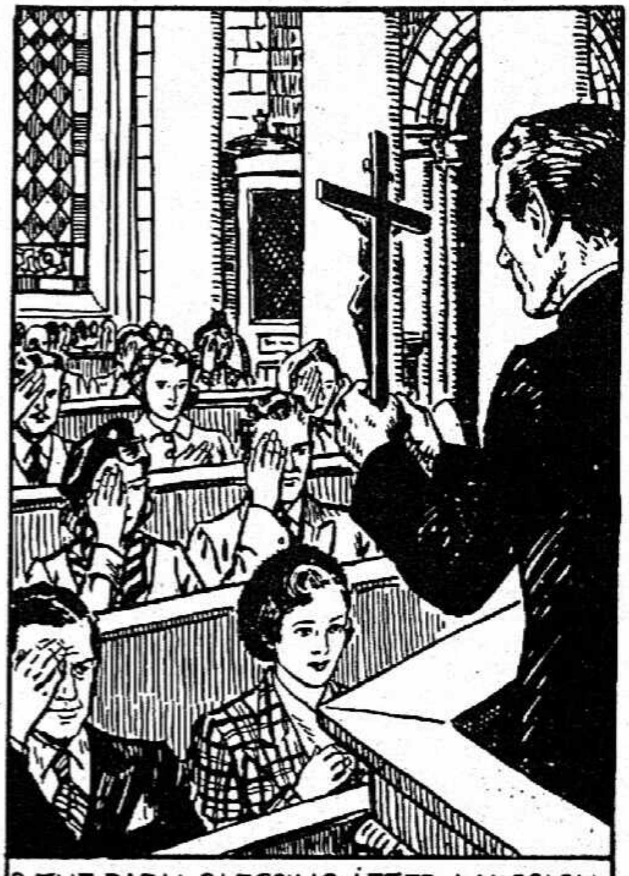
Some Congresses, like Eucharistic Congresses, are chiefly devotional; others aim at taking counsel and proposing steps to meet needs of the Church. However, these congresses do not take part in or interfere with the government of the Church, which resides *exclusively* in the bishops.

They merely *cooperate*, support, make suggestions, in order to make such government more effective. Each congress must have the authorization of the bishop.



1. A RETREAT FOR YOUNG MEN

During the sermons of a mission or retreat (1), we should listen attentively, avoiding all kinds of noise such as coughing, fidgeting, whispering, etc. We should remember the motive for the mission, and act accordingly.



2. THE PAPAL BLESSING AFTER A MISSION

At the end of a mission or retreat the Papal blessing is given, by which all who attended the exercises gain a plenary indulgence. As the priest gives the blessing, the people should kneel and make the sign of the cross (2).

188. Other Practices of Devotion

What is the Way of the Cross?—The Way of the Cross is a kind of pilgrimage, in which we visit in our mind the most important scenes of Our Lord's Passion in Jerusalem.

Tradition says that the Blessed Virgin originated this devotion by often walking in the steps of her Son to Calvary, pausing at the spots marked by some special incident. This devotion is called *Via Crucis,* Way of the Cross, or Stations of the Cross.

1. The Way of the Cross is made by stopping at *fourteen stations* indicating the path followed by Our Lord, bearing His cross, from the palace of Pilate to Calvary.

The fourteen stations are marked by fourteen wooden crosses. Pictures and inscriptions are usually added, but the indulgences of the devotion are attached to the crosses.

2. In making the Way of the Cross, we visit the stations *consecutively,* pausing at each one, and meditating on the scene which is represented by the station.

It is advisable and usual to go from station to station in the church. It is enough to meditate on the Passion, without saying any set prayers, although it is usual to recite one *Our Father,* one *Hail Mary,* and one *Glory be to the Father* at each station. A favorite ejaculation said at the beginning of the mediation before each station is: "We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world."

3. The Way of the Cross is a most *profitable* devotion. Meditation on the Passion of Our Lord leads us into contrition and the practice of virtue. A plenary indulgence is attached to this devotion.

If we are *prevented* by sickness, long distance from the church, or any other hindrance of sufficient nature, from making the way of the cross, we can *gain the indulgence* by reciting twenty times the *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and *Glory be to the Father,* holding meanwhile a crucifix properly blessed for the stations. The very sick gain the indulgence by just holding the crucifix and making an act of contrition, or a sign of sorrow.

What are novenas?—Novenas are public or private devotions carried on for the space of nine days in honor of God or the saints or angels.

1. The *first novena* of the Church was held by the Apostles and disciples who with our Blessed Lady awaited the coming of the Holy Ghost after the Ascension. Following the example of the Apostles, the *faithful* make novenas directly to God or to Him through one of the saints, to obtain spiritual or temporal favors.

Any suitable prayers may be used in making a novena. The best way, however, is to hear mass and receive Holy Communion daily as practices for the novena.

2. Novenas are commonly said in *preparation* for a specified feast. They usually end with a general communion of those who took part.

The novenas most often made are: for Pentecost, for Christmas, for Corpus Christi, for Christ the King, for the feast of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, for the Immaculate Conception, for St. Joseph, for the Guardian Angels, for the patron saint of the community. The "Novena of Grace" in honor of St. Francis Xavier's canonization has been productive of innumerable and extraordinary favors. It is said from March 3 to March 11.

What is a Mission?—A Mission is a series of sermons and other spiritual exercises conducted under the leadership of a competent priest or priests for the purpose of renewing fervor in the spiritual life of a community.

Missions effect an immense amount of good. Because of their rare occurrence, they make a great impression on the people. Missions are seasons of grace for a community or parish; sinners are converted and the just are incited to progress in virtue. This is because they are a sort of general check-up of the spiritual status of the community.

1. In most places Missions are held at least *once a year*. They usually last a week, and end in a general communion of all who have participated.

The regular program of a Mission includes daily sermons, meditation, and congregational singing.

2. During the Mission we should as far as possible *withdraw ourselves* from worldly amusements and spend as much time as we can with Our Lord, or meditating on spiritual things, especially on the topics brought up in the sermons.

Again and again we should think over the words of Holy Scripture: *"For what does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?"*

3. The Mission serves to remind us that our destiny is *heaven,* and that therefore we should not be too much immersed in earthly distractions to the exclusion of our spiritual progress.

It serves to remind us that worldly honors and riches and pleasures are nothing, and that *the only true riches* are the love and service of God alone.

4. During the Mission we should *examine ourselves* very carefully, including our conduct during the whole year, to see where we can make improvements, and where they are most needed. Then we should make a good confession, with a firm determination to amend, and serve God better.

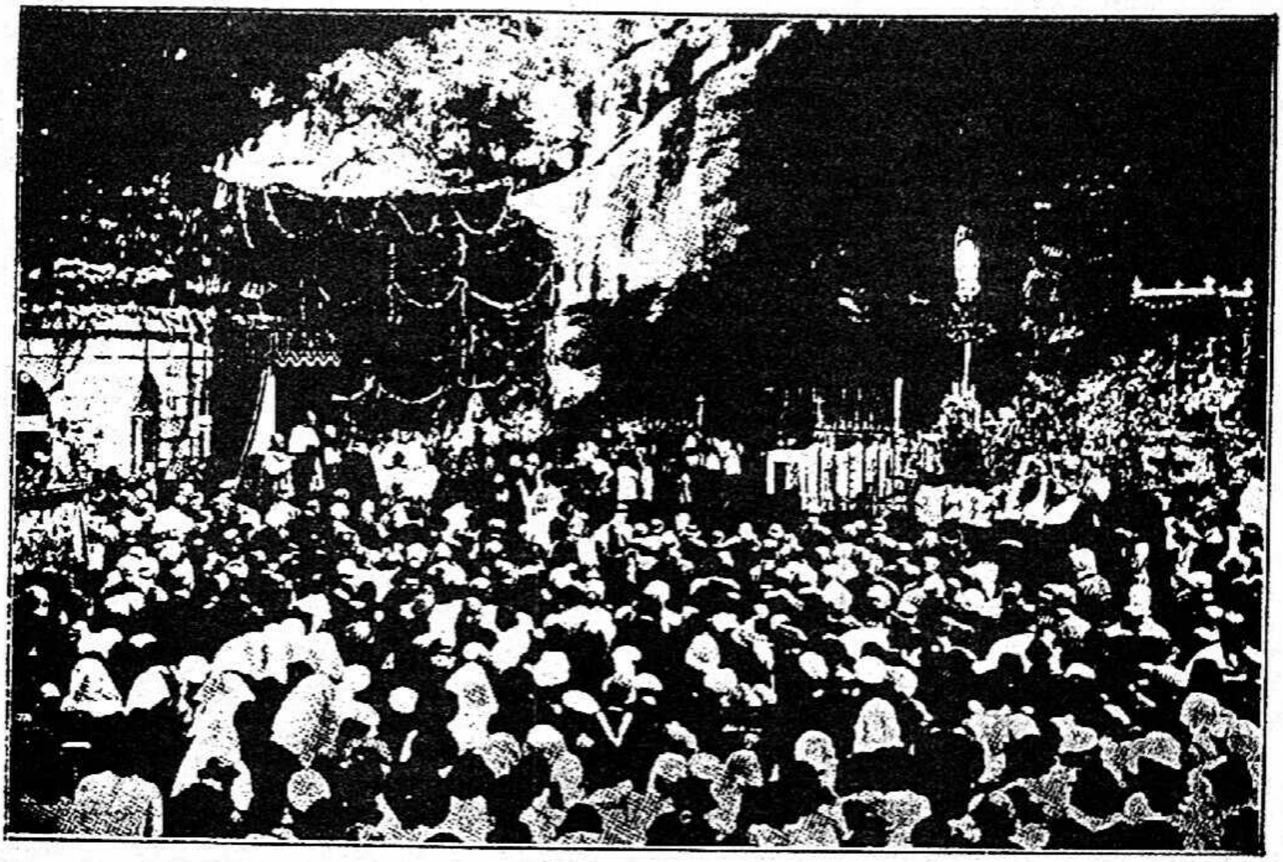
The Mission is a good chance for those who are bashful about confessing to their parish priest, who knows them. During the Mission several priests from elsewhere are usually present to hear confessions. Many confess more freely to a priest who is a stranger than to their parish priest or curates.

What are retreats?—Retreats are a series of spiritual exercises and religious services held in convents, schools, and similar institutions, for a certain class of persons, whether priests, nuns, schoolchildren, laymen, or laywomen.

1. The retreat is *similar* to a Mission, and has about the same effect. It is better than a Mission in the sense that the retreat-master can particularize his discourses, as those present are supposed to belong to only one class of individuals having similar tastes and similar problems.

It is also better than a mission inasmuch as it can lead to more devotion; *complete silence* during the course of the retreat is usually required. Those taking part leave for the period all occupations and worldly amusements.

2. Many schools and religious houses organize *special retreats* for the accommodation of those in the world who wish to go in retirement for their annual spiritual exercises.



One of the most famous places of pilgrimage is the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, France. In 1858, the Blessed Virgin, proclaiming herself the Immaculate Conception, appeared there to a little peasant girl named Bernadette. From then on a spring has flowed out of the grotto, the water of which has been the means of curing hundreds of thousands. Pilgrims from the remotest parts of the world going to the shrine number about a million a year. The cures are certified by a bureau of eminent physicians, most of whom are non-Catholic. At Lourdes physical cures are not the only ones made; there are also many conversions.

189. Processions and Pilgrimages

What is the purpose of processions?—Processions are held to set before us forcibly events in the life of Christ and doctrines of our faith, or to implore the mercy of God, or as a public act of thanksgiving.

1. Processions are held in honor of God or the Saints. It is by way of an open *profession of faith* that Mother Church has instituted processions like those of Corpus Christi, Rogation Days, Christ the King, etc. Processions are also held in times of calamity, to offer united prayer to God.

Our Lord promised that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He would be in the midst of them. He also required us to profess Him publicly before our fellowmen.

2. In a procession, a cross is always carried in front. Banners or standards are also carried, and candles are borne.

Images are usually carried, except when the Blessed Sacrament is taken in procession. In this latter case it is the practice not to carry images. The prayers recited or hymns sung vary according to the object of the procession.

Which are the regularly-held processions?—The processions regularly held are:

1. The procession of the feast of the *Purification*, February 2. This feast, celebrated in honor of Our Lady's Purification, is also called Candlemas; on this day candles are blessed.

The wax tapers carried during the procession symbolize Christ, the Light of the World, whom Holy Simeon called "a light of revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32).

2. The procession of *Palm Sunday*. Blessed palms are carried, in memory of Our

Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The priest knocks three times at the door of the church with the processional cross. Then the door is opened, to show that only through trials can we enter heaven.

3. The processions on *Rogation days.* These take place on the three days preceding the Ascension.

They are for the purpose of asking blessings on the fields and crops. The Litany of all the Saints is chanted.

4. The procession of *Corpus Christi,* the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. It is most solemn, the Blessed Sacrament being carried and placed on two altars specially built for the purpose, for the adoration of the people.

The feast of Corpus Christi (Body of Christ) was instituted about six centuries ago as a special memorial of the love of Christ for us. In the 13th century Pope Urban IV instituted the procession of Corpus Christi in order to increase faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The procession is generally ended with a solemn thanksgiving, the *Te Deum.* The feast of Corpus Christi is a holyday of obligation in many countries. Where the procession is not made on Thursday, it is transferred to the following Sunday.

5. The procession of *Christ the King,* celebrated on the last Sunday in October. In this the Blessed Sacrament is carried. It is usual to permit only men to walk in the procession, the women standing along the way.

When the Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession, it is taken in a monstrance under a canopy, and incense is burnt. It is the custom to ask important civil officials who are good practical Catholics to hold the posts of the canopy during the procession.

What are pilgrimages?—Pilgrimages are journeys made to holy places with the object of giving honor to God or His saints, and as a means of devotion and penance.

1. Pilgrimages were made in the *Old Law.* On the three principal feasts of the year, all the men had to go up to the Temple at Jerusalem. Thus we read in the Gospel how Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple when He was twelve years old.

"And his parents were wont to go every year to Jerusalem, at the feast of the Passover" (Luke 2:41).

2. The chief *places of pilgrimage* are: the Holy Land where Our Lord lived and died, Vatican City with its sacred places, shrines of the Blessed Virgin, and spots sacred to the Apostles. Those on a pilgrimage must not act like curious tourists simply bent on sight-seeing. They should remember their purpose of honoring God, and act accordingly, otherwise their visit to holy places loses its merit.

In the *Holy Land* the chief places of pilgrimage are the secene of the Crucifixion and the Holy Sepulchre on Mount Calvary in Jerusalem, the place of the Nativity at Bethlehem, and the place of the Annunciation at Nazareth.

3. In Rome, City of the Prince of the Apostles, the principal places visited are the four *basilicas:* St. Peter's, where the body of Peter rests; St. Paul's outside the walls, where one can pray at the tomb of Paul; St. John Lateran, and St. Mary Major.

A pilgrimage is usually undertaken to obtain graces, in thanksgiving for graces received, or in *fulfillment of a vow.* Pilgrimages are made to Rome every jubilee year. God shows His approval of pilgrimages by granting many spiritual and temporal favors to the participants.

4. Shrines of pilgrimage in honor of the *Blessed Virgin* are scattered all over the world, and are so numerous as to be almost countless. But the most famous are: Lourdes in France, Loretto in Italy, Zaragossa in Spain, Czestochowa in Poland, Fatima in Portugal, Guadalupe in Mexico, Lujan in Argentina, etc.

(a) At Lourdes every year a million pilgrims offer their love to Mary Immaculate, and profit by her intercession; many miraculous cures have taken place there.

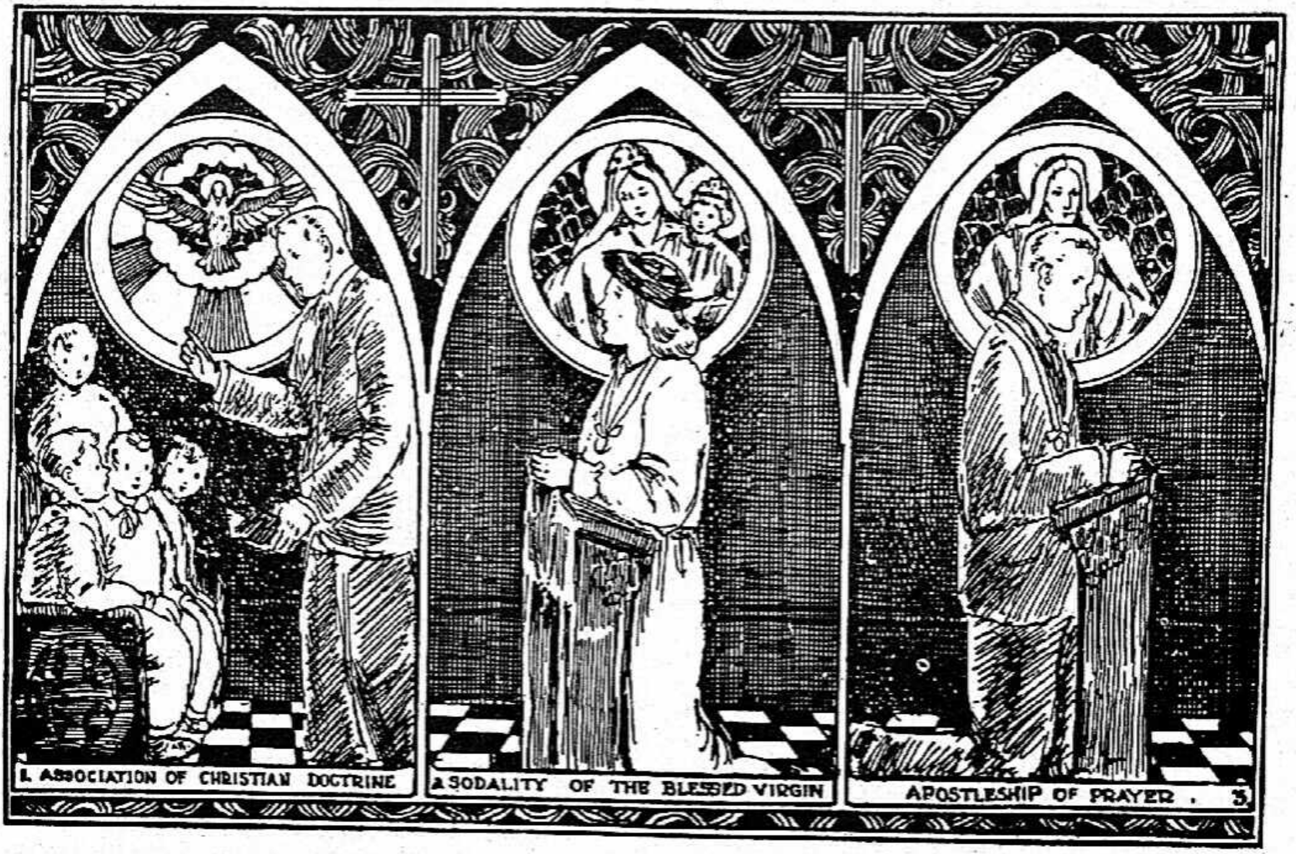
For other shrines of Saints we may also mention St. Becket's at Canterbury, St. James' at Compostella, and St. Patrick's at Donegal.

(b) Since the year 1295 the holy house of Nazareth, dwelling place of the Blessed Virgin, has been located in Loretto, Italy.

This humble home was seen by St. Louis about forty years before in Nazareth itself; then it appeared in various places in Europe until it finally made its appearance in Loretto. Since the house appeared in the various places without the help of human beings, its location in Loretto is a miracle. A great church has been built over the house, and the spot is a very famous place of pilgrimage.

5. In Canada we have Beaupré, where pilgrims seek blessings from St. Anne.

Famous shrines in the U. S. are: Mother Cabrini Chapel, New York City; Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C.; Shrine of the Little Flower, Royal Oak, Michigan; Our Lady of Prompt Succor, New Orleans.


1. ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
2. SODALITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER. 3

The illustration (1) shows a young man, member of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. This important society should be established in every parish. In the Sodality of Our Lady (2) the members honor the purest of all mankind and strive to imitate her virtues, especially that of chastity. Their activities in the parishes include the teaching of catechism. A member of the Apostleship of Prayer (3) aims to help promote the glory of God in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

190. Religious Associations

What are religious associations for the laity?—Religious associations for the laity are societies under direct ecclesiastical control, established for the purpose of personal sanctification, for works of charity, and for other similar aims.

Religious associations are generally *classified* into: (1) secular third orders; (2) confraternities; and (3) pious societies. In addition there are associations that do not have a distinctively religious purpose, but all members must be pious Catholics.

Of these last the ***Knights of Columbus*** is the best known and largest, a fraternal mutual benefit society of Catholic men, with half a million members in the United States, Canada, Alaska, Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.

What are secular Third Orders?—Secular Third Orders are societies of lay people affiliated to organized religious orders, and founded for some devotional or active work for God's greater honor and glory.

The object of Third Orders is to have the religious life of the religious orders penetrate into the homes, so that, in imitation of their brethren of the First and Second Orders, lay people in the world may strive after greater perfection, although not bound by any vows under pain of sin.

Third Orders are like religious orders, being *branches* of these to which they are affiliated. They have a probation similar to a novitiate, a rule, and a habit. The rule is not binding under pain of sin. The habit is not worn in public without permission.

In the United States the principal Third Orders are the: Augustinian, Benedictine, Carmelite, Dominican, Franciscan, etc. Members of Third Orders are "brethren", sharing in the merits and spiritual life of the first and second orders of religious.

What are confraternities? — Confraternities are societies of lay people erected by ecclesiastical authority for the furtherance of works of piety and charity.

The rules of confraternities are *not binding under pain of sin*. However, if the rules are not observed, the special graces, and *indulgences* attached to them are not granted. Confraternities with the right to affiliate similar associations to themselves are termed *archconfraternities*. We here list a few examples of our largest confraternities.

1. The ***Confraternity of Christian Doctrine***, by order of the Holy See, is to be instituted in every parish, to promote greater knowledge and more assiduous practice of the Catholic Faith. The means used are: instruction classes, study and discussion clubs, home instruction, and religious education of non-Catholics.

The Episcopal Committee on the Confraternity organized a Publications Department, and established a National Center, as a part of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The National Center sponsors Congresses, makes investigations and surveys and supplies information about activities.

2. The ***Holy Name Society*** aims to promote due love and reverence for the Holy Name of God and Jesus. (*See page* 199.)

3. The ***Society of the Holy Family*** is an archconfraternity, aiming to sanctify Christian families. Men, women, and children can all become members.

This archconfraternity has some five million members throughout the world; but it is not very widely established in the United States.

What are pious societies?—Pious societies are associations of lay persons which have the same aims as confraternities, but do not have solemn canonical erection.

Some pious societies have personal sanctification for their chief aim; some adopt particular practices of devotion; and others interest themselves in certain good works, like catechism classes, the raising of funds for religion, etc. They are variously called *pious unions, sodalities*, and *leagues*.

1. The ***Apostleship of Prayer*** (League of the Sacred Heart) promotes the glory of God and the sanctification of its members by the performance of all prayers and good works in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To become a member, one only need to have one's name registered in an affiliated center and receive the certificate of admission. There are three degrees of members, with corresponding spiritual duties. The most common devotions of this association are the morning offering and the First Friday devotion.

The morning offering is worded thus: "O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our associates and in particular for those of Thy Sacred Heart this month." In the United States alone the Apostleship of Prayer has 6,000,000 members.

2. The ***Sodality of Our Lady*** aims to develop full Catholic life by devotion to Jesus through Mary; it is for personal holiness and active Catholicity.

Before formal acceptance, a candidate is given a period of *probation*. Those whose conduct is not worthy of a child of Mary are rejected. The Sodality has a monthly communion day and a monthly or weekly meeting. Members use a medal with a blue ribbon. They say the prayers of the Office of the Blessed Virgin, hear sermons, say the rosary, have meditation, go for visits to the Blessed Sacrament, etc.

In the parishes, sodalists generously help out in such activities as: helping build and care for the church, as members of the vestment and altar society; teaching catechism, especially on Sundays; in the choir; as members of parents' clubs; visiting the sick and the poor, distributing aid to the poor; helping run reading and study clubs, and propagating good literature; joining Catholic social life, etc.

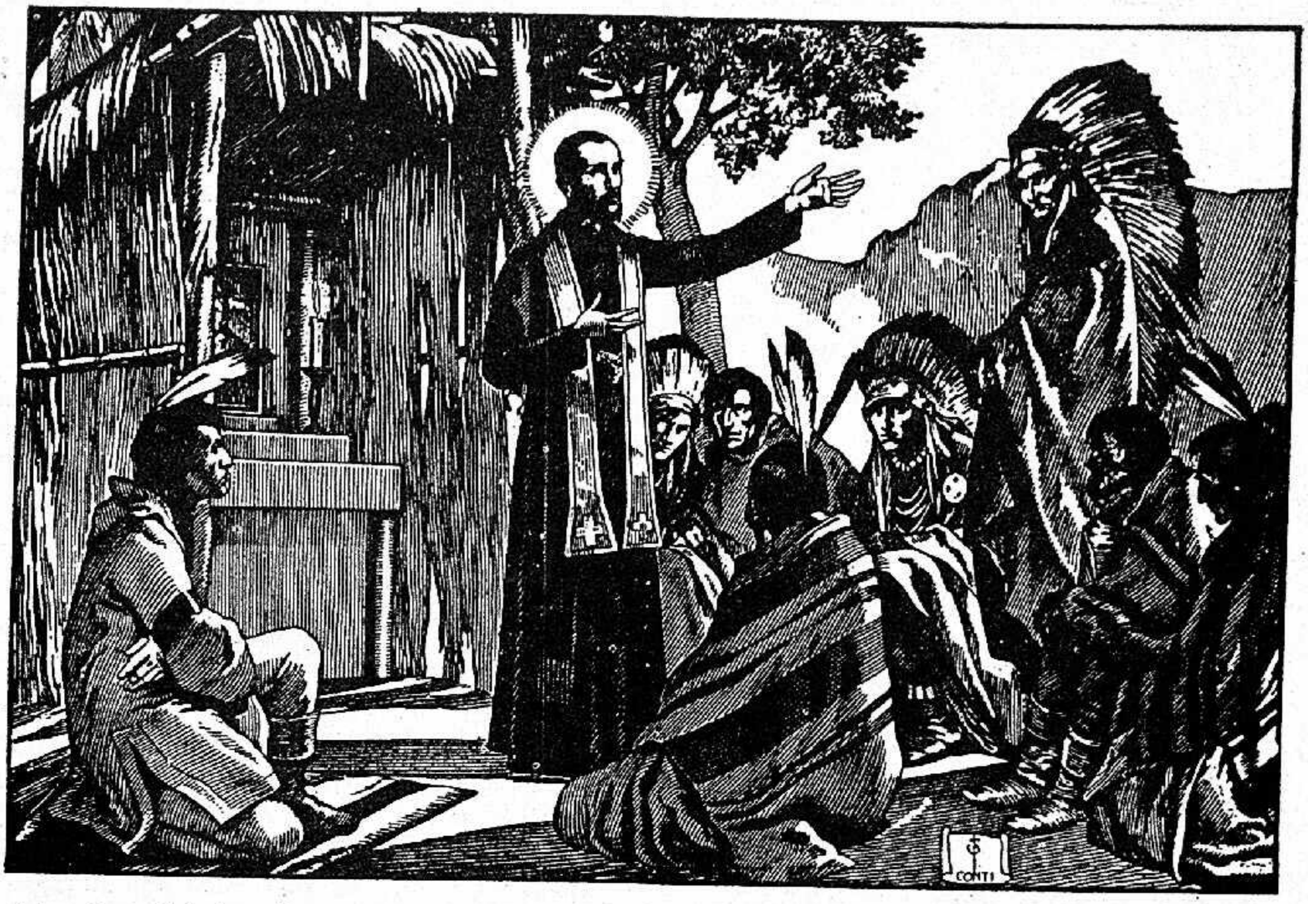
3. The ***Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary*** is a religious association for the purpose of promoting the devotion of the Rosary. Members are required to recite fifteen decades of the rosary every week; this does not bind under pain of sin.

To form the "living rosary," fifteen members unite every month to divide among themselves (generally by lot) the *fifteen decades* of the rosary. Daily, throughout the month, each one recites the decade that fell to his lot. Thus among the fifteen in the group, the entire rosary is recited every day.

4. The ***Society of St. Vincent de Paul*** is established for the relief of the poor and neglected; its works are a living embodiment of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Only Catholic men over 18 years of age are accepted members. Each is assigned a poor family for weekly visits.

Honorary members have no poor families under their special care; but they make an annual offering of a fixed sum, for the works of the Society. In 1944 the Society spent in the United States the amount of $2,300,000 for the poor.

There are numerous worthy and approved mission associations actively engaged in mission work. Good Catholics should try to belong to some of them, in order to be of help in the propagation of their Faith.



It is not possible for all to go to distant missions to win souls for Christ. But one can always help by prayers and alms. Those who thus assist missionaries in their apostolic labors will be rewarded.

Holy Scripture says: "Equal shall be the portion of him that went down to battle and of him that abode at the baggage; and they shall divide alike" (1 Kings 30:24).

191. Propagation of the Faith

How can we help the missions?—We can help the missions:

1. By *praying for the missions,* home and foreign, and for missionaries that they may fulfill the command of Christ: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

We should include in our particular petitions each day a fervent prayer for missions and missionaries; they are the vanguard of God, making Christ known in regions darkened by paganism. "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

2. By *knowing the missions* and making them known to others.

We learn about the missions by reading mission magazines and other periodicals, by joining mission societies, by contributing to missionary appeals, by taking active part in missionary work. Let us love the missions, for it is only by them that the approximately one billion souls still unbaptized may know and love Christ our Lord.

3. By *making sacrifices* for the missions; that is, by helping to support them, and by personal service.

This is best done through mission societies that we should join as members, as well as through missionaries personally known to us.

4. By *fostering vocations* of self-sacrificing young people for the missions.

Many good Catholics support or help support students in seminaries, destined for the missions. Others support priests and religious serving in the missions. If we cannot imitate these good people, on account of our financial situation, we can always offer up fervent prayers and sacrifices.

Which are the different official Church organizations intended to promote and to collect means for the propagation of the Faith?—The following are the most important organizations:

1. The ***Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith.***

This Society aids missionaries at home and in foreign fields by means of prayers and the collection of alms. All money collected is distributed by the central office in Rome. The only conditions for membership are:

(a) Daily prayers of one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and the invocation, "St. Francis Xavier, pray for us"; and

(b) A membership offering, varying from One Dollar for ordinary membership to Forty Dollars for perpetual membership.

Even deceased persons are eligible for enrollment as members, and will share in the merits of missionaries as well as in Masses offered for benefactors. In the United States the Society has one million members, and annually 15,000 Masses are offered for benefactors.

In October the Sunday before the last is ***Mission Sunday***, when special collections are made by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith as well as for the other Pontifical Mission Societies.

2. The ***Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood.***

By this organization Catholic children throughout the world make their contribution of prayer and alms for the welfare of children in mission fields; thus our children become little Apostles. Enrollment may be made as early as the day of Baptism. The conditions are:

(a) Daily prayers of one *Hail Mary* and the ejaculation: "Holy Virgin Mary, pray for us and for the poor pagan children," and

(b) Almsgiving to the Association.

Members gain numerous merits: sharing in those of missionaries and of the children benefitted, in Masses offered by missionaries everywhere, in the prayers of all members, etc.

3. The ***Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle.*** This association was organized to help in the formation of native clergy in mission lands. This aim is accomplished in three ways:

(a) By *prayers* for the formation of new priests, holy and pleasing to God;

(b) By furnishing the *material* aid necessary for the maintenance of major and minor seminaries in the missions; and

(c) By supporting poor *seminarians* in their studies for the priesthood, in territories under the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith.

One point alone out of many shows the importance of the Society. To forward the work of the Church, the Society provides for the long and special preparation necessary (between twelve and fifteen years) for the training for the priesthood of a native clergy.

4. The ***American Board of Catholic Missions.*** This Board is composed of the United States hierarchy.

It supervises collections by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and divides forty percent of the amount for U. S. missions.

5. The ***Catholic Church Extension Society.*** This is a home organization, established for the purpose of building chapels and schools, supporting mission churches, distributing Mass stipends to missionaries, and educating priests for the home missions.

The activities of the Society include the United States, Alaska, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico.

6. The ***Catholic Near East Welfare Association.*** This is a pontifical mission society organized to raise funds for the support of missions in the Near East.

Individual membership contribution is One Dollar a year, family membership Five Dollars. Perpetual membership of individuals is Twenty Dollars, and of families One Hundred Dollars.

7. ***Commissariat of the Holy Land.*** This organization collects and distributes funds for the support of the Holy Places, as well as of educational and charitable projects in the Holy Land.

The commissariat also supports young men studying for the Palestine missions.

8. ***Commission for Catholic Missions among the Colored People and Indians.*** This Commission is engaged in furnishing aid to Indian and Negro missions.

Its activities include the United States and Alaska. Of the 13 million Negroes in the United States, only some 310,000 are Catholics.

9. ***Catholic Students' Mission Crusade.*** It is engaged in promoting missionary knowledge among Catholic students, by means of a national magazine, textbooks, lectures, plays, and similar methods. Its activities include spiritual, educational, and missionary aid.

The Mission Crusade has a membership of approximately 1,000,000, of whom about 700,000 are between the ages of 12 and 15 years.

192. Church Symbolism

What is symbolism? — Symbolism is the giving of a rather hidden meaning to external things, particularly in order to express religious ideas.

By symbolism man apprehends reality; art in all its forms is the symbolical expression of inexpressible ideas, the positive manifestation of absolute Beauty. This is why *ceremonial*, which is but a symbolic representation, is vital to the life of man, whose highest desires concern a grasping at the ultimate.

1. Symbolism is invaluable, because it *expresses ideas* otherwise utterly inexpressible. For instance, can we express the idea of eternity in either word or picture? Yet how easily the idea is depicted by the symbol of the circle, — something without beginning, without end.

Similarly we cannot explain in however numerous volumes the definiteness of One God in Three Persons; we cannot draw a picture of that idea. And yet let us draw an equilateral triangle, and by that symbol the idea is definitely conveyed: Three Persons co-equal, co-eternal, yet only One God.

2. By a *familiar sign* a symbol tells a story; it is a mark of identification. It expresses with exactness and beauty certain religious truths. It is not an end in itself, but a means to an end: a symbol uses art for the purposes of religion.

A symbol must not be a representation of something, but rather a *representative*. For example, a man is not symbolical of Our Lord; but a lamb with a banner lying on a book with seven seals is. And true symbolism must always be understood as representative. For when the symbol is taken as the very thing represented, then we have idolatry, a sin against God's commandment. If we worship the lamb itself, and not Jesus Christ, then that is idolatry. It should however be clearly understood that the commandment outlaws *worship* of the symbol, not the symbol itself.

3. Symbolism is *essential* to all kinds of religious worship. The Old Testament is full of it, forming the basis of our Christian symbolism, by which we apprehend through our senses a God-given and absolute beauty and truth.

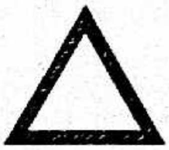
The purpose of symbols is *educational*, to help man lay hold of the Infinite. Few knew how to read; books were expensive and lettered by hand. Preaching in the enormous cathedrals was not very easy, without our modern devices. The people loved God; but they could not learn about Him by oral or written instruction. And so symbolism came to the rescue, and the great churches became beautifully illustrated textbooks, for everybody to read and understand. The medieval Christian read into common objects carved, cast, painted, embroidered, or woven, a religious and mystical meaning; that was his culture, his art.

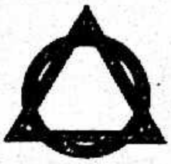
We must not, however, mistake *types*, or even pictures, for symbols. If we confine ourselves to animals and inanimate objects, and avoid historical characters, we are safely in the realm of symbolism. Moses on Sinai is not a symbol, but a type, of Our Lord on the Mount. Similarly, Samson is a type of strength, and St. George of courage; they are not symbols.

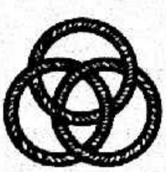
4. From earliest times the Church has made use of symbols, to foster devotion, or to stand for some mystery of the Faith that needed to be kept secret from pagans. For instance: the early Church used a fish to stand for Christ; a town, a ship, or a woman with uplifted arms to stand for the Church.

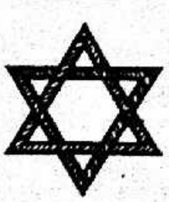
Name the most common Catholic symbols.—The following are most common:

1. For the *Most Blessed Trinity*: the equilateral triangle to depict equality as well as unity; a combination of the triangle with the circle, to depict in addition the idea of eternity; the interwoven three circles of identical size; the interwoven triangles, one with apex upward and the other with apex downward, thus forming a six-pointed star, which is a symbol of creation; two interwoven triangles combined with a circle; the trefoil, which is a variation of the interwoven circles; the trefoil with triangle, another development of the three circles with an equilateral triangle; the trefoil with three points, another development.



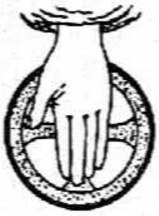


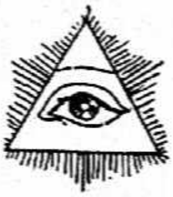




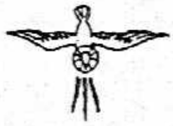
Other symbols for the *Holy Trinity* are: the triquetra, with equal arcs of the circle symbolizing equality, unity, eternity, and indivisibility; the triquetra with a circle; the triquetra with a triangle; the three fishes arranged in the form of a triangle.

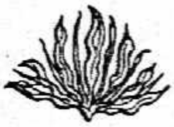
2. For *God the Father*: a hand coming out of a bank of bright clouds; an eye in an equilateral triangle; a six-pointed star, termed the Creator's star; the Hebrew letters for the word Jehovah (God), inside a triangle, and surrounded by rays; the Hebrew yod inside a triangle, or two yods within rays of glory.



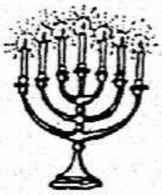


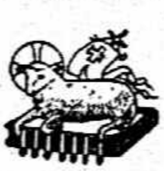
3. For *God the Holy Ghost*: the descending dove, though this must not be too realistic, and must be with the three-rayed nimbus; the cloven flame of fire, or seven flames; the scroll, to show the seven gifts; the seven lamps, seven doves, seven-fold flame, seven-branched candlestick; the star with seven points, or with nine points, to depict the seven gifts or the nine fruits of the Holy Ghost.



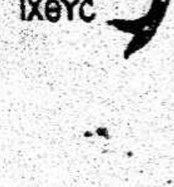


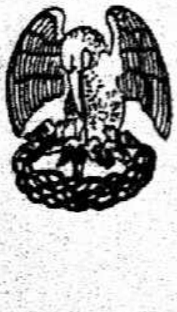
4. For *God the Son*, our Blessed Saviour. These are almost too numerous to mention, the most important being the cross, with some fifty forms in use. Our Lord is represented by: the Lamb of God on a book with seven seals, or with a banner of victory, or with both; the Good Shepherd; the five-pointed star; the fish; the pelican feeding her young with her blood; the cross on an orb; the vine; the rock; the unicorn; sacred monograms.

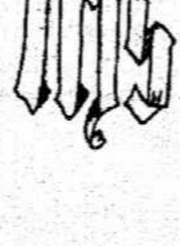




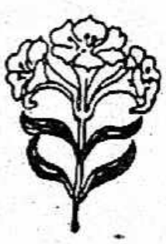
The "Chi Rho" symbol is an abbreviation of the word *Christ*, with the Greek letters X and P, the first two letters of the word in Greek. Like other monograms for Jesus, it has various forms. At times the Chi Rho is combined with the Alpha and Omega, or with the Greek cross, or with the letter N (*Nika*, meaning conqueror). The IHC symbol is an abbreviation of the Greek word for *Jesus*. Today IHS is also used. Another variation is IC XC, to stand for *Jesus Christ*. INRI means "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews".

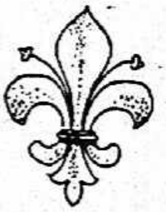




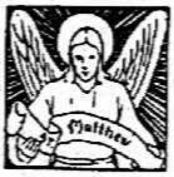


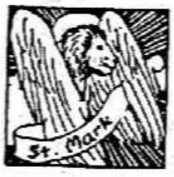
5. For the *Blessed Virgin*: the lily, symbol of virginity and purity; the fleur-de-lys in various forms; the rose, white or pink; the pierced heart; the crescent moon; the crown with stars; a star; her monogram, the flowering almond, the closed gate, the sealed book.

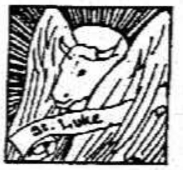


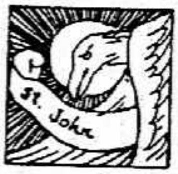


The symbols for the four *Evangelists* are: a human head for St. Matthew, because his Gospel starts with a relation of the human ancestry of Christ; a lion for St. Mark, because the beginning of his Gospel relates the story of St. John the Baptist in the desert, the home of wild beasts; an ox for St. Luke, because this animal was a symbol of sacrifice, and St. Luke's Gospel begins with a relation of the priest Zachary in the Temple; an eagle for St. John, because the opening verses of his Gospel carry the reader on a flight to the Infinite.



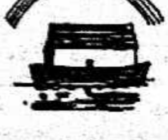




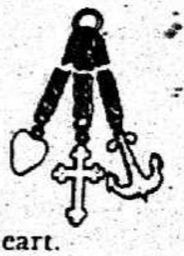


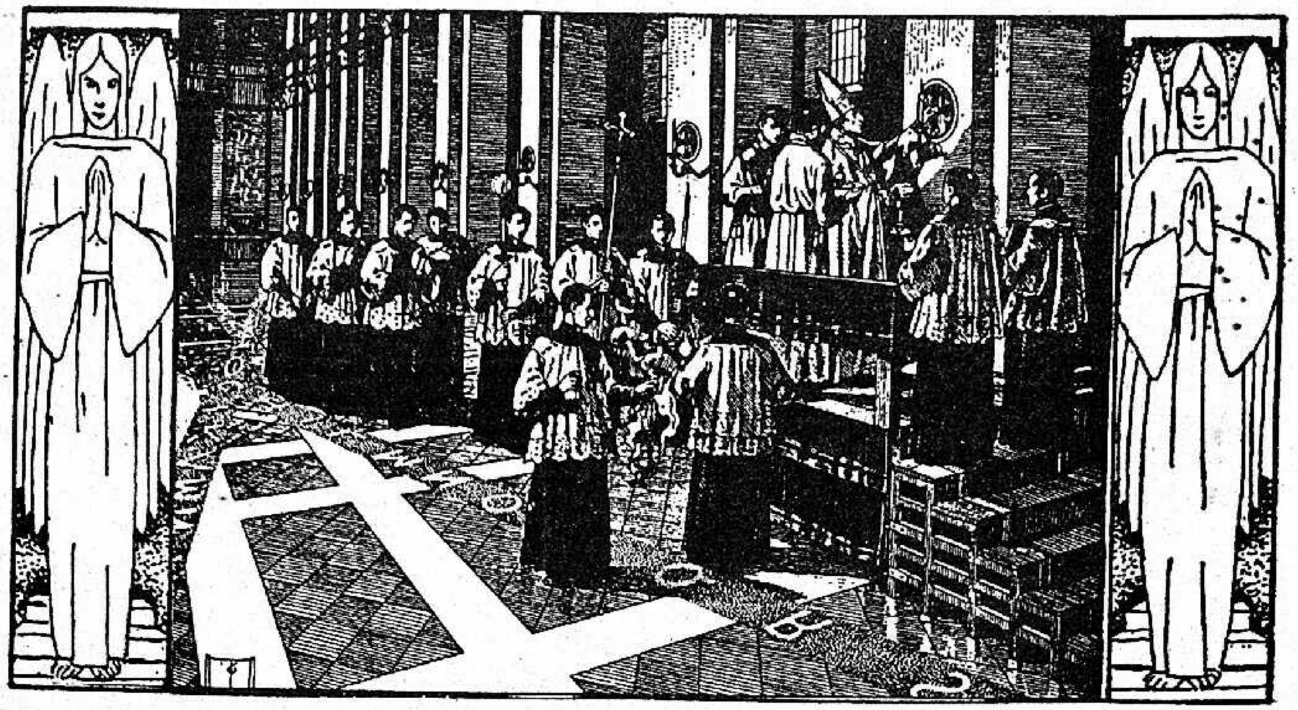
Other symbols are: for the *Sacraments*—the font, a dove, a chalice, a whip, an oil stock, clasped hands and a stole; for the Word of God, an open Bible, a burning light, a candle, two scrolls; for Penance, a priedieu; for Matrimony, two clasped hands; for Holy Orders, a stole, or a chalice on a Bible, with folded stole; for prayer, a censer with smoking incense; for sacred music, a lectern; for the Epistle and Gospel, a double lectern; for benediction, an upraised hand without nimbus. A banner symbolizes victory; a flaming sword, God's authority; a crown, sovereign authority; two tables of stone, the Commandments; a book or scroll, the Law; crossed keys, the power of the Pope.

6. For the **Church** we have the symbols of: the ark, the ship, the ark of the covenant; the vine; the woman with dragon underfoot; the crowned woman; the bride with chalice and book; the house on a rock; the city on a hill; the candlestick; the wheat and tares; the net.



7. Symbols still commonly used are: the olive branch for peace; the palm for martyrdom; the lily for purity; the halo for sanctity; the rose for love and beauty of soul. Faith, hope, and charity are represented by a cross, an anchor, a heart.





These are the chief ceremonies in the consecration of churches, a solemn occasion. The bishop prostrates himself near the entrance, and recites the Litany of the Saints. Rising, he encircles the church building three times outside, meanwhile sprinkling the walls with holy water; each time he passes the main doorway, he knocks upon it with his crosier. Then he marks the threshold with the sign of the cross, using his crosier; after this he enters the church, kneels down, and invokes the Holy Spirit.

Next the bishop traces the letters of the Greek and Latin alphabets upon the pavement, on which have been strewn ashes. He goes around the interior of the church three times, sprinkling the walls with holy water; then he goes thrice up and across the center of the building. Then follows the anointing of the walls in twelve places, where tapers are set. Finally the altar is consecrated.

The effect of these ceremonies and prayers is to set the building apart for the exclusive service of God. The sign of the cross after the knocking at the door signifies the strength of the cross of Christ whom none can resist. The letters of the alphabets signify that all nations without exception are called into the Church of God. The going up and across the interior of the church signifies honor paid to the Blessed Trinity and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The twelve lighted tapers stand for the twelve Apostles, who spread abroad the light of Christ's Gospel.

193. Conclusion: Why I Am a Catholic

How does our reason point out the truth of the Catholic religion? — Our reason points out the truth of the Catholic religion by these principles:

1. There is a God (*see pages* 6-29). We need only to look about us and contemplate the heavens and the wonders of nature, to be sure that all this order and beauty could not have come into existence except by the almighty power of an intelligent Being, God.

Who made the heavenly bodies and set them in fixed places, and traced the paths they should follow from age to age? Who made the trees, and commanded particular plants to spring from certain seeds? Who made life? Who, if not God?

2. The soul of man is immortal (*see pages* 34-38). A man can reason, make abstract conclusions, distinguish between right and wrong. These are acts of a spiritual faculty, and the soul to which this faculty belongs must be spiritual and independent of matter, and being so, is not subject to death. A man can say *No* to himself.

No other being on earth can do the spiritual things man can do. In this world man alone has intelligence and free will, therefore he alone has an immortal soul. Animals act only from instinct and sense, which are organs of the body; animals therefore cannot be immortal.

3. All men are obliged to practice religion (*see pages* 2-3, 170-171, 186-187). Man, with his intelligent and immortal

soul, can know God according to the limits God has set. He knows that he owes to God his very existence, that he is entirely dependent on Him. From this origin and dependence arises man's duty to give his Creator due honor and adoration, in other words, his duty to practice religion.

To be faithful to God, we must serve Him by obeying His commandments and carrying out His wishes; by believing in Him, hoping in Him, and loving Him with all our hearts. All these things we learn about when we study our religion; all these we do aright when we are faithful in the practice of our religion.

4. The religion God revealed through Christ is worthy of belief (*see pages* 14-21, 56-59, 66-73). Our Lord announced Himself the Son of God, and as such preached His doctrines that He required us to believe. To prove that He was truly God, Our Lord worked numberless miracles.

God alone can work miracles, and He cannot work them to approve what is false. The miracles therefore worked in favor of the teaching of Jesus Christ are manifest proofs that His teaching is true.

5. Christ established a Church which all are obliged to join. He declared that all men must believe and be baptized, that is, belong to His Church, in order to be saved. (*See pages* 94-99.)

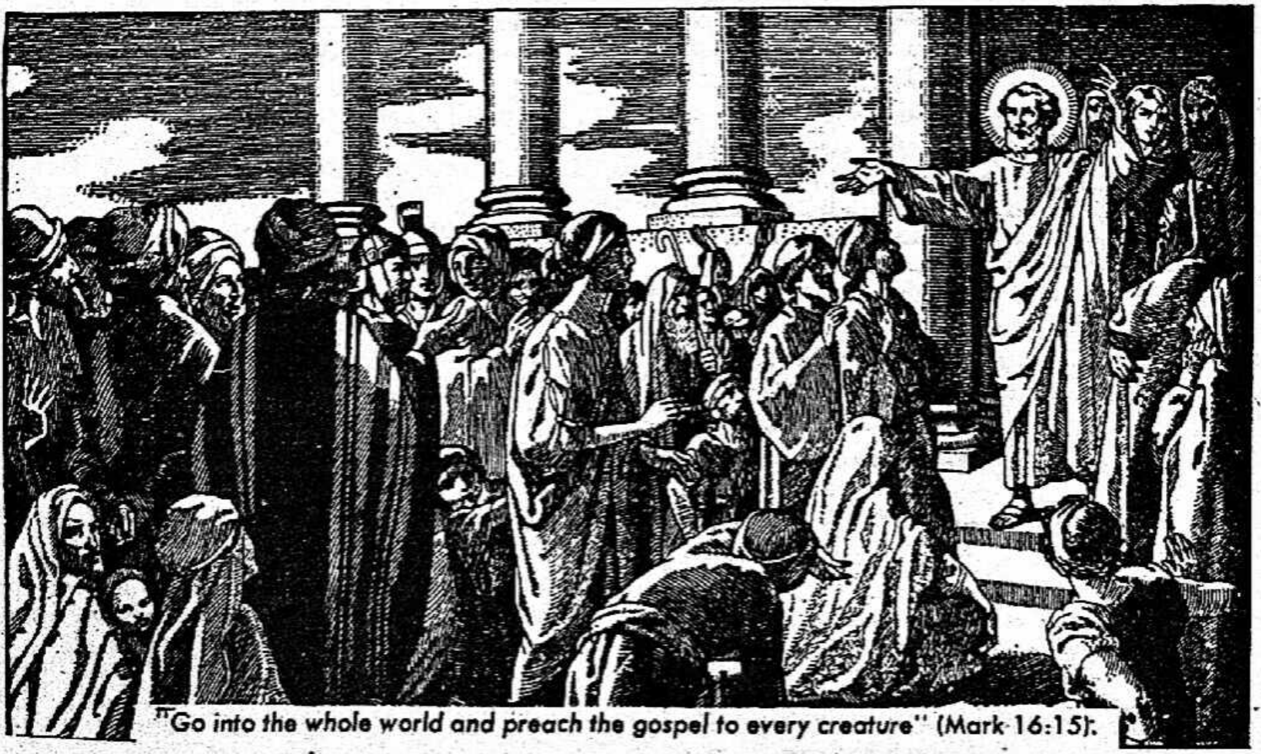
Our Lord gathered about Him a group of disciples, and called it His Church; He promised that this Church would last forever. "He who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, . . . and behold I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20).

6. The only true Church of Christ is the Catholic Church. Only the Catholic Church possesses the marks of unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity, marks of the Church established by Jesus Christ. (*See pages* 100-107, 132-145.)

The history of the Catholic Church gives incontestable evidence of miraculous strength, permanence, and unchangeableness, thus showing the world that it is under the special protection of God, Who said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Let us thank God for His gifts. We can best show our gratitude to God for making us members of the only true Church of Jesus Christ by often thanking God for this great favor, by leading edifying and practical Catholic lives, by trying to lead others to the true faith, and by helping the missions.

We thank God for the graces He showers on us in prayer and by our good lives. By following the commandments of God and the Church, and doing good works, we lead practical and edifying Catholic lives; such lives are the best way of leading others to our Faith, if we have no more direct means. By such lives we say, ***"Deo gratias!"***



"Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Appendix

THE CHURCH YEAR

(*See page 240 for an explanation of the different periods and seasons.* Holydays of obligation are marked with a cross †)

THE CHIEF FEASTS OF THE YEAR

†The Immaculate Conception, *December 8.*

On this feast we honor the unique privilege by which the Blessed Virgin Mary was exempted from original sin. It is the first important feast of the ecclesiastical year. It is a holyday of obligation. It is also the patronal feast of the United States, which is especially consecrated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

†Christmas Day, *December 25.*

This, one of the most beautiful feasts of the year, is celebrated in remembrance of the Nativity of Our Lord. On this day priests are allowed to say three Masses in memory of the triple birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ: a midnight Mass to commemorate His eternal generation as God in the bosom of the Father; a Mass at dawn, to honor His temporal birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Bethlehem; and a Mass at daytime, in memory of His spiritual birth, as our Redeemer, in the hearts of the faithful. It is only on Christmas and All Souls' Day that priests are allowed to say three Masses.

For Christmas a crib is built in churches, schools, and many homes, to commemorate the crib at Bethlehem. Little children are specially encouraged to help build the crib. The crib was popularized by that great saint, Francis of Assisi.

The Holy Innocents, *December 28.*

The feast honors the children murdered by order of King Herod, as recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel.

†The Circumcision, *January 1.*

On this day we honor the first shedding of blood by our Divine Lord for the salvation of our souls. The feast was also instituted to implore the blessings of Almighty God on the new year. The rite of circumcision, a symbol of Baptism, was imposed by Moses on all male children, and was undergone the eighth day after their birth, to distinguish them from the Gentiles. For us Christians, Baptism took the place of circumcision. On the Feast of the Circumcision, the ceremony of the renewal of baptismal vows takes place.

Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus *(The first Sunday after the Circumcision if it falls on any day between January 2 and January 5. If not, the feast is celebrated on January 2).*

This feast is to give special honor to the Holy Name of Our Lord. Every time we pronounce the Name of Jesus, we should bow our heads.

The Holy Name Society was founded by Gregory X in 1274 to combat the growing evil of cursing, swearing, and irreverence. It is a society for men.

The Epiphany, *January 6.*

This feast celebrates the manifestation that Jesus Christ the Messias made to the nations of the world reperesented in the persons of the Magi. It also commemorates the Baptism of Our Lord by St. John the Baptist, and the first miracle at Cana, when Our Lord changed water into wine at the request of His Blessed Mother.

Feast of the Holy Family *(Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany).*

This feast was instituted in order to hold up as the model of Christian families the holy Family of Nazareth, composed of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Septuagesima Sunday.

Septuagesima Sunday, and the two following Sundays, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, mean respectively seventieth, sixtieth and fiftieth, because they fall near the 70th, 60th, and 50th days before Easter. Quadragesima Sunday, near the fortieth day, is the first Sunday of Lent.

In the United States, the period in which Catholics may fulfill their Easter duty of Confession and Communion begins with the first Sunday of Lent, and lasts till the Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity, on the Sunday after Pentecost.

Octave for the Unity of the Church, *January 18 to 25.*

The Purification of the B. V. M., commonly called Candlemas Day *(February 2).*

By undergoing the ceremony of purification after childbirth, imposed on all Jewish women, Our Lady, who needed no purification, gave an example of obedience and humility to the whole world. This day the Church celebrates the blessing of candles, which symbolize Christ the Light of the World, entering the Temple to be presented here to God His Father.

The day following Candlemas is the feast of *St. Blase,* patron for ailments of the throat. Then it is the practice to have throats given a special blessing by being touched between two crossed candles.

Our Lady of Lourdes, *February 11.*

This feast celebrates the apparition of the Immaculate Conception in the town of Lourdes, France. (*See page* 390).

Ash Wednesday.

This day opens the Lenten season. Catholics go to church to receive the ashes which the priest marks on their foreheads with the words: *"Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."* The ashes are from the palms blessed the previous year. They symbolize penance.

Passion Sunday.

From noon of the day previous to Passion Sunday, the crucifix and the statues on the altar are wrapped in violet, as a sign of mourning. During Passion Week and Holy Week, the Church follows closely the last scenes of Our Lord's life; on the last three days of Holy Week, she even reproduces, in a kind of sacred drama, the very acts of His Passion, death, and burial.

Our Lady of Sorrows (*Friday in Passion Week*).

This feast is instituted to commemorate the great sorrows of our Lady during the Passion of her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Feast of St. Joseph, *March 19*.

This is celebrated in honor of the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin, in whose care were placed Our Lady and Jesus Himself.

Palm Sunday.

This is the first day of Holy Week. It commemorates the entrance of Our Lord for the last time into Jerusalem, when the multitude, bearing palm and olive branches, went out to welcome Him, with cries of *"Hosanna!"* Before the solemn Mass begins on this day, palms are blessed, in remembrance of that triumphal entrance of Our Lord. They are kept in the homes as a sign of blessing.

Holy Thursday.

This day especially commemorates the institution of the Blessed Sacrament by Our Lord at the Last Supper. On this day takes place the washing of feet in memory of that ceremony performed by Our Lord, Who washed the feet of His disciples just before the institution of the Holy Eucharist. There is a procession of the Blessed Sacrament after Mass, and a consecrated Host is placed on another altar, called the Repository, where It remains until the following day. On this day good Catholics devote an hour or two to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament thus solemnly exposed.

In the cathedrals the holy oils are consecrated by the Bishops on this day. These holy oils are used for administering the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, Extreme Unction, and Holy Orders, as well as for consecrating churches, altars, chalices, bells, etc.

Private Masses are forbidden on this day. At the only Mass in each church, there is a general communion in which the priests take part. After the Mass, the altar is stripped, in order to show that the Holy Sacrifice is interrupted until Holy Saturday.

On the night of Holy Thursday, an all-night vigil is kept in church before the Repository. Where there is more than one church in the community, people go from one to another in the afternoon and evening of Holy Thursday, praying at each Repository.

Good Friday.

This is the only day in the whole year on which the Sacrifice of the Mass is not offered. The service is not a Mass in the proper sense of the word, because there is no Consecration. The officiating priest consumes the Host Which was consecrated the day before and reserved on the Repository. There is no Communion for the faithful this day.

On this day also takes place the adoration of the cross. The anthems and responses sung during the adoration of the cross are called "Improperia" or Reproaches—words addressed by Our Lord to the Jews. They are a striking and very dramatic feature of the Good Friday service. The unveiling of the cross is symbolic of Christ being stripped of His garments. The devotion of the Stations of the Cross is practiced today in all churches.

In a number of churches the sermon of the "Seven Words" is made; then it is usual to have the sermon last from noon till three o'clock, when the "Last Word" is spoken. This sermon is an attempt to portray the last hours of Our Lord on the Cross.

Holy Saturday.

On this day the Church blesses the new fire, the Paschal candle, the incense, and the baptismal font. At noon the season of Lent ends, and Easter time begins. The *Regina Coeli* instead of the *Angelus* is said until the eve of Trinity Sunday.

The interesting ceremonies taking place on Holy Saturday morning were originally performed on Saturday night, and ended at dawn on Easter morning. Hence their joyous character.

The triple candle symbolizes the Blessed Trinity. The paschal candle stands for Christ, rising from the dead. The five grains of incense represent His five wounds.

Easter Sunday.

This feast, the *greatest solemnity* of the Christian year, the feast of feasts, is in honor of the Resurrection of Our Lord from the dead. The Mass is full of allusions to the Resurrection of Christ and to Baptism, which is a spiritual resurrection.

Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon of the spring; it may occur any Sunday between March 22 and April 25.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *March 25*.

This day commemorates the coming of the Angel Gabriel to Our Lady, announcing to her that she was to become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Patronage of St. Joseph (*Wednesday after the second Sunday after Easter*).

This feast lays special stress on the office of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, a natural consequence of his position as Protector with regard to Our Lord and His Mother.

Rogation Days.

The three days before the Ascension are called Rogation Days. On these three days a procession is held during which the Litany of the Saints, psalms, and other supplications are sung, to appease the anger of God, and to draw down His blessings on the fruits of the earth. April 25 is also a Rogation day.

†The Ascension *(forty days after Easter)*

This feast celebrates Our Lord's going up into Heaven forty days after His Resurrection. The extinguishing of the Paschal candle after the Gospel on Ascension Day symbolizes the departure of Our Lord from earth. It is a holyday of obligation.

Whitsunday, or Pentecost Sunday.

The chief object of this feast is the commemoration of the coming of the Holy Ghost on the assembled Apostles. It is one of the three chief feasts of the year, considered second only to Easter.

May, the Month of the Blessed Virgin.

In nearly all churches the month of May is celebrated with daily devotions, usually consisting of the recitation of the Rosary and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Often a sermon is given on the Blessed Virgin. Special indulgences are attached to these devotions.

At homes and in schools small altars are built in honor of the Blessed Mother; flowers are offered to her. During the month of May devout Catholics hear Mass daily.

The Finding of the Cross, *May 3.*

This day commemorates the finding of the True Cross of Christ by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, in a pit near Calvary in the year 326. One of the oldest feasts of the Church, it is known to have been celebrated in the fourth century. Originally celebrated on September 14, in the 8th century the feast of the Finding was transferred to May 3, and September 14 was set apart for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

Trinity Sunday *(Sunday following Pentecost Sunday)*.

This feast specially honors the Most Holy Trinity.

Corpus Christi *(Thursday after Trinity Sunday)*.

This feast is consecrated to the Holy Eucharist. It was established in order to celebrate most solemnly and with all pomp the institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament, since it is not possible to do so on Holy Thursday on account of the other Holy Week celebrations. On this day or on the following Sunday a great procession with the Blessed Sacrament is held.

Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. *(Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi)*.

On this feast the Church honors the Sacred Heart of Jesus and makes reparation for the poor way men repay His great love. For this purpose the prayer of consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is ordered to be said. The *Feast of the Eucharistic Heart* is celebrated the day before.

Birthday of St. John the Baptist, *June 24.*

This feast is in honor of Our Lord's Precursor.

Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, *June 29.*

This feast is in honor of the two great Apostles especially commemorating St. Peter, Christ's Vicar on earth, the first Pope of God's Church.

The Most Precious Blood, *July 1.*

In honor of the Holy Blood of Our Lord, shed in His circumcision, agony, passion, and crucifixion, this feast is celebrated.

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *July 2.*

This feast is to commemorate the visit made by Our Lady to her cousin Elizabeth, before the birth of St. John the Baptist. It recalls the charity of Our Lady.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, *July 16.*

All good Catholics should wear the brown scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, enriched with many indulgences.

The Transfiguration, *August 6.*

This feast commemorates the day when Our Lord took Peter, James, and John up to a mountain apart, and there was transfigured before them, His face shining as the sun, and His garments becoming white as snow.

†The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *August 15.*

On this feast is commemorated what happened after the death of God's holy Mother: her body and soul were taken up into Heaven, where she was crowned by her Divine Son Queen of all Angels and Saints. It is a holyday of obligation.

In the earliest days, the Church commemorated only the deaths of the martyrs, calling this their birthdays, as then they are born to heaven. Then an appeal came for the celebration of feasts in honor of Saints who were not martyred. Naturally, Mary the Mother of God here took first place. By the sixth century such a feast in honor of Mary on August 15 was observed throughout the universal Church.

Nativity of Our Lady, *September 8.*

This feast honors the birth of our Mother the Blessed Virgin.

Among all the Saints, John the Baptist is the only one who shares with Mary the honor of having a birthday feast celebrated by the Church. This is because John was freed from original sin before his birth, as Mary was free from the moment of her conception.

The Most Holy Name of Mary, *September 12.*

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, *September 14.*

The Emperor Constantine had two churches built on Calvary, and in one the relic of the True Cross was kept. Later, the king of Persia, Chosroes, carried away the relic to Persia; but the Greek emperor Heraclius waged war, defeated Chosroes, and returned the True Cross to the basilica on Calvary, in the year 629. From the eleventh to the fourteenth century, it was the thought of the True Cross that inspired the Crusaders in their battles for the Holy Places of Palestine.

The Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *September 15.*

This is the second of the feasts celebrated to honor the sorrows of Our Blessed Mother, the first feast being on the Friday of Passion Week. The seven sorrows thus honored are: Simeon's prophecy (Luke 2:15), the flight into Egypt, the three days' loss of the Child Jesus (Luke 2:42-46), the way to Calvary, the Crucifixion, the taking down of Our Lord's Body from the cross, and the burial of Our Blessed Lord.

Feast of the Guardian Angels, *Oct. 2.*

Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, *Oct. 7.*

The feast of the Holy Rosary recalls the best prayer to honor our heavenly Mother. It was on the 7th of October 1571 that the Christians defeated the Turks at Lepanto, gaining the victory through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. All Catholics are recommended to pray daily at least five decades of the Holy Rosary. The feast is often celebrated on the first Sunday of October.

St. Dominic is said to have received the Rosary from Mary as a powerful weapon in his contest with the Albigensian heretics. Already in the twelfth century a formula similar to the rosary had been in use; the Dominicans promoted widespread recourse to this devotion in the fifteenth century.

Mission Sunday. (*Sunday before the last in October*).

The *Sunday before the last of October* is set apart in a special manner for the missions. On this day the sermons and the instructions should be about the work that is being done by the missionaries for the spread of the Catholic faith; a collection is taken up for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. All Catholics are urged to become members of that Society and thus help in that work so dear to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord.

Feast of Christ the King (*Last Sunday in October*).

On this day the Church invites all her children to join in offering public and solemn homage to Jesus Christ, our King, acknowledging His spiritual kingship over the Church, and proclaiming the rights and benefits of His reign over families and nations. Christ is our King not only by reason of His divine nature, but by reason of His human nature as well, since He was appointed King by His heavenly Father and redeemed mankind by His death on the Cross.

What a beautiful and good world we should have, did all nations and people obey Christ as King! Let us remember that He promised to come some day in the clouds of heaven, as King, in great power and majesty.

†Feast of All Saints, *November 1.*

On this day the Church honors all the Angels and Saints in heaven. It is a holyday of obligation.

This day is a great family feast. It had its origin in the year 610, when Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon of Rome to the Blessed Virgin and all the martyrs. It is in special commemoration of the millions of Saints in heaven who have not been officially canonized by the Church, and thus have no special commemoration during the year.

All Souls' Day, *November 2.*

This day commemorates all the holy souls in Purgatory. It is a day for pious remembrance of the dead, and for offering of Masses and prayers for them. On this day as on Christmas, priests are allowed to say three Masses, for the souls of the departed, that they may be free from Purgatory.

From noon of All Saints' Day till midnight of the next day (All Souls' Day), all those who have confessed and received Holy Communion on either of the two days or within the following octave may gain the *toties quoties* indulgence: a plenary indulgence applicable to the souls in Purgatory every time they visit a church or public chapel, and pray *six Our Fathers, six Hail Marys,* and *six Glorias* for the intention of the Holy Father. It is to be noted here that those who are accustomed to go to confession at least twice a month, or to communicate daily in the state of grace and with an upright and holy intention, and even though they do not go to communion once or twice during the week, may without confession gain all the indulgences for which confession is prescribed as a necessary condition. If the *toties quoties* indulgence is not gained on All Saints' and All Souls' Days, it may be gained on the Sunday following. When November 2 falls on a Sunday, All Souls' Day is celebrated on the Monday following, November 3.

The Most Important Prayers

The Sign of the Cross

IN THE NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

(One hundred days' indulgence; with holy water, 300 days)

The Lord's Prayer

OUR FATHER who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

HAIL MARY, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Doxology

GLORY BE to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I BELIEVE in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Confiteor

I CONFESS to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore, I beseech the blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May the Almighty God have mercy on me, and forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution, and remission of all my sins. Amen.

Act of Faith

O MY GOD, I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

(Indulgence of three years)

Act of Hope

O MY GOD, relying on Thy almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

(Indulgence of three years)

Act of Love

O MY GOD, I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

(Indulgence of three years)

Act of Contrition

O MY GOD, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

(Indulgence of three years)

The "Hail, Holy Queen"

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN, Mother of Mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

(Indulgence of five years)

Morning Offering

O MY GOD, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, and sufferings in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the intentions for which He pleads and offers Himself in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in thanksgiving for Thy favors, in reparation for my offenses, and in humble supplication for my temporal and eternal welfare, for the wants of our holy Mother the Church, for the conversion of sinners, and for the relief of the poor souls in purgatory.

I wish to gain all the indulgences attached to the prayers I shall say and to the good works I shall perform this day.

Blessing before Meals

✠ BLESS US, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Grace After Meals

✠ WE GIVE Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, O Almighty God, who livest and reignest forever; and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days)

Prayer Before Work

DIRECT, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our actions and further them with Thy continual help, that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from Thee and through Thee be likewise ended. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer After Work

WE GIVE thee thanks, O Almighty God, for all Thy benefits, Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

Consecration to the Blessed Virgin

MY QUEEN! my Mother! I give myself entirely to thee; and to show my devotion to thee, I consecrate to thee this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Wherefore, good Mother, as I am thine own, keep me, guard me, as thy property and possession.

The Memorare

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! To thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but, in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

Prayer to St. Joseph

GUARDIAN OF Virgins and father, Holy Joseph, to whose faithful care Christ Jesus, very innocence, and Mary, Virgin of virgins, were committed, I pray and beg of thee, by these dear pledges Jesus and Mary, free me from all uncleanness, that with spotless mind, pure heart, and chaste body, I may ever most chastely serve Jesus and Mary all the days of my life. Amen.

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

ANGEL of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love entrusts me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Blessed be His most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and immaculate conception.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

(Indulgence of ten years)

Regina Coeli

Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.
For He whom thou didst deserve to bear. Alleluia.
Hath risen as He said. Alleluia.
Pray for us to God. Alleluia.
V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary! Alleluia.
R. Because Our Lord is truly risen. Alleluia.

Let us Pray

O God, who by the resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, hast vouchsafed to make glad the whole world, grant, we beseech Thee, that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

(Indulgence of ten years)

De Profundis

OUT OF the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall abide it!

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness; and by reason of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word; my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night: let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins, that through pious supplications they may obtain that pardon which they have always desired: Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Five Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord

The Five Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Ghost
4. The Assumption of our Blessed Mother into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother

Prayer Before a Crucifix

LOOK DOWN upon me, O good and gentle Jesus, while before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech Thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; the while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me, calling to mind the words which David Thy prophet said of Thee, my good Jesus: "They have pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all my bones."

Anima Christi

SOUL of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds, hide me.
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy, defend me.
In the hour of my death, call me.
And bid me come to Thee,
That, with Thy saints, I may praise Thee
For ever and ever. Amen.

Act of Resignation to the Divine Will

O LORD MY GOD, I now at this moment readily and willingly accept at Thy hand whatever kind of death it may please Thee to send me, with all its pains, penalties, and sorrows.

(Plenary indulgence at the hour of death, for those who say the above prayer on any day chosen, after Communion and Confession.)

Ejaculations

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

(300 days' indulgence)

My Jesus, mercy. *(300 days' indulgence)*

Most sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. *(500 days' indulgence)*

Mother of mercy, pray for us.

(300 days' indulgence)

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless us now and at the hour of our death.

(300 days' indulgence)

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

Prayer to Christ the King

O Jesus Christ, I acknowledge Thee as universal King. All that has been made, has been created for Thee. Exercise all Thy rights over me. I renew my baptismal vows, renouncing Satan, his pomps and his works; and I promise to live as a good Christian. In particular do I pledge myself to labor, to the best of my ability, for the triumph of the rights of God and of Thy Church.

Divine Heart of Jesus, to Thee do I proffer my poor services, laboring that all hearts may acknowledge Thy Sacred Kingship, and that thus the reign of Thy peace be established throughout the whole universe. Amen.

Tantum Ergo

TANTUM ergo Sacramentum,
Veneremur cernui: *(bow your head)*
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui:
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.
Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio;
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. *Amen.*

Adoremus in Aeternum

Sanctíssimum Sacramentum.

Laudáte Dominum omnes gentes, laudáte eum omnes populi.

Quoniam confirmáta est super nos misericórdia ejus et véritas Dómini manet in aetérnum.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sáncto.

Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc et semper, et in saécula saeculórum. *Amen.*

The Manner in Which a Lay Person is to Baptize in Case of Necessity

Pour ordinary water on the forehead of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it:

"I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

N. B. Any person of either sex who has reached the use of reason can baptize in case of necessity, but the same person must say the words while pouring the water, and have the right intention.

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